

Wednesday September 4 1996

Table of exchange rates for various countries including Abu Dhabi, Albania, Andorra, etc.

The Guardian INTERNATIONAL

Printed in London, Manchester, Frankfurt and Roubaix

NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR

46,649

Paul Foot on beating and the upper class

Mark Lawson on 30 years of Star Trek

Society

Yarooo!



Captain's log



Explosive call on nature

G2 with European weather

G2 pages 4/5

Page 12/13

US strikes on Iraq spark wide condemnation as Saddam stays defiant Clinton wrecks Gulf alliance



A Tomahawk cruise missile launched from the USS Laboon yesterday, one of 27 missiles targeted on Iraqi defence and communications positions

US attack map showing missile targets in Iraq and surrounding regions like Turkey, Iran, and Saudi Arabia.

World opinion table showing reactions from various countries like France, Spain, Russia, etc.

Only Britain offers complete backing

Martin Walker in Washington and Ian Black in London report on the US strike and international reactions.



Text accompanying the illustration, possibly a quote or commentary.

What does the US do now?, page 6

Saddam vows revenge, page 6

How the US attacked Iraq, page 7

Britain out on a limb, page 7

Leader and letters, page 8

Main body text of the article discussing the US strike, international reactions, and the Gulf alliance.

Lost up a mountain: one very small piece of paper worth a gigantic amount of money

Wivak Chaudhary in Belfast reports on a man who found a lottery ticket worth millions.

Views of the Atlantic and surrounding Irish countryside.

Went up the mountain with his American girlfriend.

Sounds, I would say he's upset about something.

Two days later but the man returned last Saturday, asking to search the rubbish bins for his girlfriend's ring.

Back, which would prove it's his. It's all very strange.

Inside: The parents of Tom and Jodi Loughlin, who drowned on a seaside visit...

World News: A thaw appeared to be under way in Sino-British relations...

Finance: BT was ordered to stop criticising competitors as the industry watchdog voiced his dismay...

Sport: Ray Winstone, England chairman of selectors, won his appeal against a £2,000 fine over newspaper articles based on his book.

Obituaries 10; Comment and Letters 8; Crossword 15; Weather 16; Radio and TV 16

Advertisement for The Guardian International Umbrella, featuring a large blue and white golfing umbrella.

Sketch Otley stands up to be discounted



Martin Wainwright

NO TOWN whose economic base once included alternative medicine whose salivary ducts were supposed to ease out cataracts — is going to take a nasty run of shop closures lying down.

So few local eyebrows were raised at the challenge issued yesterday from the banks of the Wharfe in the lower Yorkshire Dales.

Look out Sainsbury's Safe Asida — here comes Otleycard: loyalty plastic which the market town of Otley, vulnerably close to the huge ring-road shopping malls of Leeds and Bradford, is planning to issue to its 12,000-odd citizens.

"We've been talking about it for months, but we don't like to talk here so much as get things done," said councillor Dawn Merrick, preparing to tackle another day's economic regeneration. "I think we might have a nice picture of the Buttercross on it, or maybe Thomas Chippendale, our most famous son."

Otleycard shopping, with information and probable discounts for holders, won an immediate welcome in the Market Square, where the eyeclickers practised their trade once a week in the years before the first world war. An exile newly returned from London, Portia Bell Ryott, paused in her search for a doormat to exclaim: "What a good idea! Mind you, provided I can get a doormat I like, I'm already finding Otley better for shopping than Ealing."

That was certainly the case just down Kirkgate, where a modest tobacconist's shopfront leads to "probably the best cigar humidor outside London," according to James Barber. Under a sepia portrait of his great-grandfather in the Barber Tobacco Plantation, Kentucky, he pulled out a Montecristo A from a shelf in the humidor — an entire, temperature-controlled room —

which retails, just the one cigar, for £34.50.

"Um, does an establishment like this really need an Otleycard?" Oh yes, though not for customers from all over the country who took Mr Barber's Havana turnover to more than £100,000 last year. "I'm very happy to support the idea if it keeps Otley people shopping in Otley," he says. "I'm not at all opposed to joining a discount scheme, if it's reckoned to benefit the community of traders here."

The town's formidable sense of community also appeared to be holding good among the sceptical young. "These students from the comprehensive had their doubts about the small, cobbled town as a fun shopping venue."

"But," said Rachel Campey, looking down at her plastic carrier, "look at me. I'm always buying things here."

Like comparable towns across the country, Otley is vulnerable to better ranges of goods in the cities nearby. "Clothes especially," said Rachel's friend Liz Neale.

"There's only one place here. Wild Thing, where you can get fashion clothes." Besides, added Daniel Gasper, third of the trio, there was much more going on in Leeds to make a shopping visit fun.

The Chamber of Trade met again last night to take the issue forward. "Certainly," said another trader, "it's likely to help more than National Shop Locally Day — that was yesterday, you know. No? Well, I'm not surprised. My only worry is that discounting could lead to an Otley price war, say if all five butchers join and start out-counting one another."

Civil war? And memories of 1848, when Cromwell's Ironsides deliberately drank the Black Bull dry? Specialist pork butchers Weegmans weren't worried about plastic turning into poison.

"It can only be a good thing in the long run," said Nigel Stringwell, cleaning his alcer under a splendid picture of the shop decked out in 1883 — "Success to Agriculture" in meat products and flowers — to mark a royal visit. A picture, like James Barber's of the record 1889 tobacco consignment from Kentucky, which may become another illustration for what could be a highly collectible card.

Review

Deftly romantic, angrily political

Derek Malcolm

Carla's Song
Venice Film Festival

A QUOTATION from George Orwell is on the title page of Paul Laverty's screenplay for Ken Loach's *Carla's Song*. The film is about a Scots bus driver who follows his refugee lover from Glasgow back to her Nicaraguan homeland as the Contra rebels mount their final brutal assault against the Sandinista government.

The quote sums up the second, more overtly political part of the film: "The thing that I saw on your face. No power can disinherit: No bomb that ever burst. Shatters the crystal spirit."

Orwell was at least partly the inspiration behind *Land and Freedom*, Loach's Spanish civil war epic, and one can see the considerable connection between the two films.

But the most notable part of *Carla's Song* is not the boldly sketched sequences in Nicaragua, where the bus driver learns some of the nastiest facts of contemporary history. It's in the gentler sections in Glasgow where he begins to love Carla, the refugee cast adrift in an alien world.

This may be because one of Loach's most valuable talents is the ability to illustrate basic political points with tiny brushstrokes that often make an argument with humour. He is not always so good when thumping home a more obvious if necessary message.

Carla's Song is ultimately as angry a film as *Land and Freedom* as it details the Nicaraguan experience of torture

and terror, watched by the bus driver with increasing horror. But it is its gentler, more romantic first half that is the more memorable.

This is partly down to the playing of Robert Carlyle as the young Scot, hopelessly at odds with his employers at Glasgow Transport and desperate to find out more about the beautiful young woman whom he meets when she's thrown off his bus for not paying her fare.

The girl is played by Oyanika Cabezas, a Nicaraguan dancer with little acting experience. And she does pretty well too. But Carlyle, who had a second triumph at the festival as the crippled footballer in Michael Winterbottom's *Go Now*, is the kind of actor who almost seems not to be acting at all, but in fact gives considerable support to those he's performing with.

Once in Nicaragua, Loach's film places us in his position as a shocked onlooker. The problem is that the relationship between the Scot and the Nicaraguan then becomes more tenuously sketched in and the film loses some of its heart and emotional impact.

Presumably, however, the film is made to underline what happened in Nicaragua in dramatic terms. This *Carla's Song* does with all Loach's political strength. Even so, the film is very much one of two halves and it is the first that shows Loach at his best simply because he is so good at making the ordinary seem extraordinary and illustrating the small injustices and absurdities of life with the kind of acute observation, humour and compassion no one else can beat and very few equal.

Bird thief caged by parrot that dared squeak its name

A MAN caught with a stolen parrot was given away when the bird told police its real name.

Clive McLoud insisted the sulphur-crested cockatoo, worth more than £1,000, was called Billy and had been given to him. But when suspicious officers introduced the bird to its real owner, Sacha Hinds, it said "Hello" and gave its name as Primrose.

McLoud, aged 40, a painter and decorator from north-west London, was jailed for 15 months yesterday for handling the stolen parrot. He had insisted he had owned it for nine months.

Sentencing him at Harrow crown court, Judge Barrington Black said Primrose had been a popular attraction at Miss Hinds' shop, Pets Are Us, in Ealing, west London.

Investors were kept in dark for months over 'irregularities' in stricken funds at Morgan Grenfell

Bank faces £500m payout

Richard Miles and Pauline Springett

AS MUCH as £500 million may have to be paid in compensation to the 50,000 investors who paid £1.4 billion into three stricken investment funds run by Morgan Grenfell Asset Management. Investors were kept in the dark for three months while managers bickered over whether the funds had breached UK rules.

It emerged yesterday that General Accident resigned on June 30 as overseer of the £778 million MG European Growth Trust, the biggest of the three funds in which deal-

ing was suspended on Monday after Morgan Grenfell said it was investigating "possible irregularities".

The insurer is understood to have been unhappy about the way the fund was being run. GA refused to comment last night. A spokesman for Morgan Grenfell Asset Management insisted GA's resignation was part of year-long programme to replace the insurer with the Royal Bank of Scotland as the trustee of all of its unit trust funds.

The Bank of England is believed to be monitoring developments, concerned that another scandal will further dent the City's reputation after the collapse of Barings merchant bank last year.

City commentators fear that as much as £500 million may need to be paid in compensation to investors when dealing resumes in the three funds, which also include the Europa Fund and the European Capital Growth Fund.

The City regulator Imro is still investigating whether Peter Young, the high-flying manager of two of the suspended funds, overestimated the value of certain high-risk stocks. Imro is concentrating on the value of the European Growth Trust's potentially high-risk investments in companies not listed on any stock exchange.

These holdings now account for a little over 10 per cent of the portfolio, but in

May they represented nearly a third of all investments, many in Scandinavian companies.

The rules for unit trusts set by the chief City watchdog, the Securities and Investments Board, impose a 10 per cent limit on "unapproved securities", typically unlisted stocks. Morgan Grenfell Asset Management last night denied it had broken any rules, citing a get-out clause which it said permitted it to exceed the 10 per cent limit so long as the companies "were thought to be coming to market within 12 months."

But other fund managers were flabbergasted at this defence, with some of the most experienced claiming it had

never heard of this rule. One said: "Morgan Grenfell is one of the premier investment managers and I cannot believe it has been linked to irregularities."

An independent financial expert, who had advised many of his clients to invest in the Morgan Grenfell funds, said he spotted the growth in unlisted stocks in May and had advised his clients to pull out. "I knew something was wrong then. You just don't expect this size of holding in unlisted stock."

The European Growth Trust's holdings in unlisted stock is understood to have mushroomed following a recent crash in technology shares around the world,

which make up a large proportion of the fund. This prompted many investors to remove their money, forcing Mr Young to sell his publicly-quoted shares to the meet the payments. The fund's exposure to unlisted stock thereby swelled by default.

Morgan Grenfell Asset Management, owned by Germany's Deutsche Bank, has said it will make good any liabilities arising from the irregularities. A few days ago, another blue-chip investment group, Flemings, paid £15 million in compensation to investors after being fined £700,000 by Imro.

Details and City Notebook, page 11

Brewer defends its tangerine 'alcopop' with childish appeal

Alex Bellis

THE makers of a new "alcopop" last night defended their decision to put half a million bottles in shops and bars, despite protests that the labelling would encourage underage drinking.

Carlsberg-Tetley ignored demands to withdraw the first batch of Thickhead — 4.9 per cent proof, tangerine-flavoured and with the consistency of hair gel — although it said it would change the label in the future.

The Portman Group, the drinks industry's voluntary regulator, said the image on the bottle of a man pulling a face contravened its code of practice because he could be under 18. It also said the word "alcoholic" was not prominent enough.

Tom Wright, Carlsberg-Tetley development director, said these were minor criticisms as private research had shown that 97 per cent of people thought the drink was marketed to adults.

He said: "The changes the Portman Group want are relatively small. The guy in the photograph is 30. We will make his expression flatter, or might give him some

stubble or take some hair away."

"Firstly the code is voluntary. Secondly it is not a vetting procedure, it is there to respond to people's complaints. We have pre-empted that to go to the group to get the label checked. We have acted totally responsibly."

Concern about teenage drinking has been highlighted by the popularity of fruit-flavoured alcoholic drinks or "alcopops". Since they were first marketed last year they have become the fastest growing sector of the alcohol market, with more than 2 per cent of off-licence trade.

Nigel Griffiths, Labour's consumer affairs spokesman, accused Carlsberg-Tetley of astonishing arrogance in ignoring the Portman Group's recommendations. "We have got to stop young people's drinking reaching epidemic levels in some parts of the country. We are clearly getting no support from some of the big players in the business," he said.

"This is the last chance the industry has to regulate itself. They are making parliamentary action inevitable."

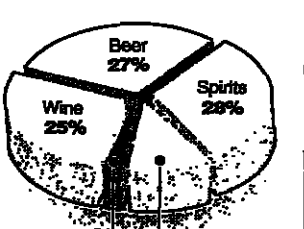
Alcohol advisory groups called for an independent inquiry into alcopops and for Thickhead to be taken off the shelves until the label is changed. Mark Bennett, of Alcohol Concern, said: "Products like this, which are more clearly based on childish culture than any of the other alcopops, are going to appeal to children. It should be withdrawn immediately."

He said the brewery's failure to contact the Portman Group before Friday was a clear sign that self-regulation was not working.

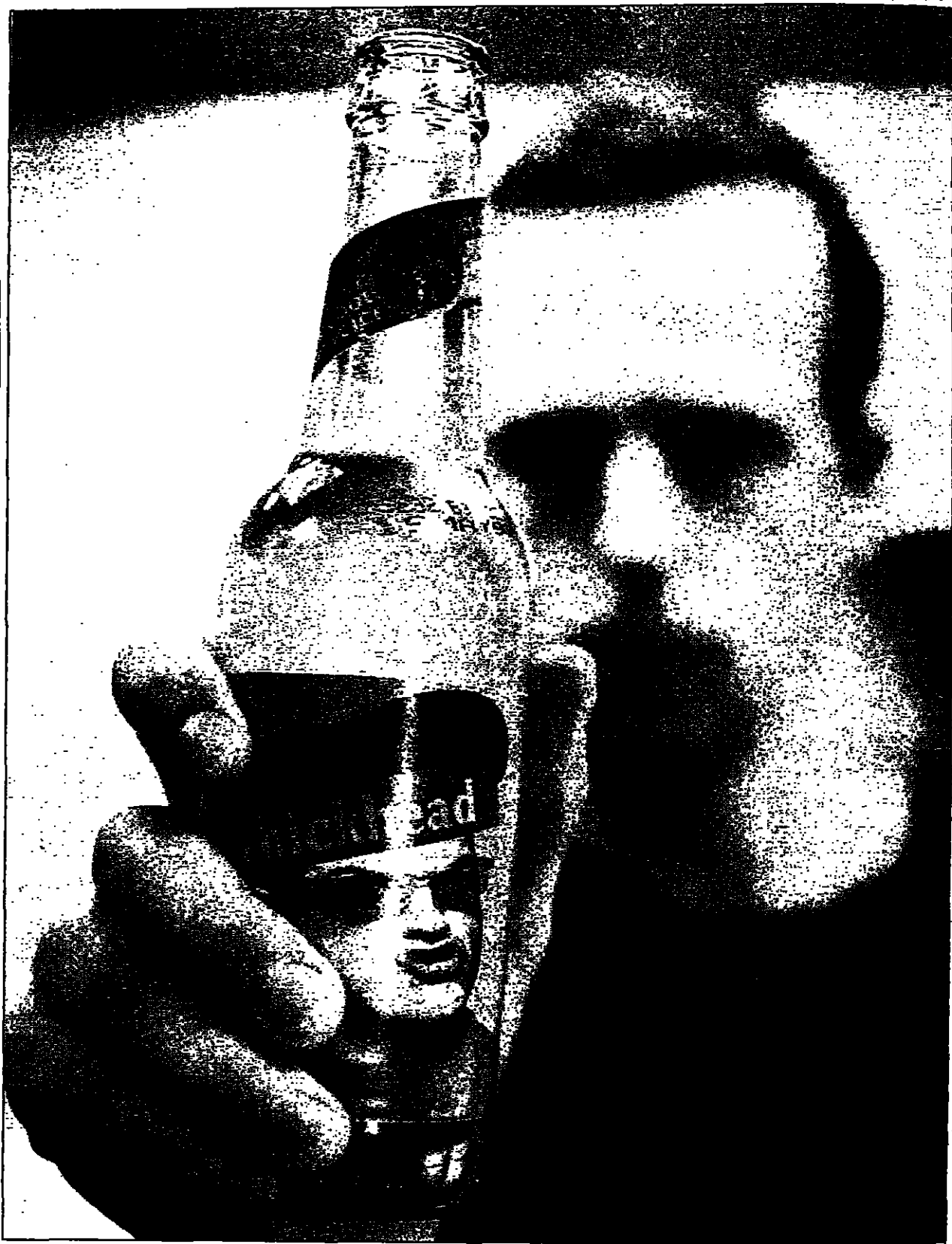
"If one of the Portman Group's own members cannot get the label right it doesn't bode well for the brave new future of self-regulation," he said.

Alcopops

Share of the market, off-licence trade



Total value of UK Market: £7bn Source: SW/MR



Thickhead, whose marketing some fear will encourage underage drinking

PHOTOGRAPH: DAVID SILLITOE

'A drink like vomit-textured fruit gums, which wants to be regarded by the young as hip, classless, ugly and gauche'

Malcolm Gluck on a sickly brew

IT IS impossible to imagine anyone of any developed palate enjoying the sight or taste of Thickhead, but therein lies its delicious and deadly appeal.

Thickhead is a tangerine-flavoured, half-set jelly thick, grossly coloured drink which purports to be soft in its packaging yet is much stronger, at nearly 5

per cent alcohol, than some strong lagers.

Drinking it is like consuming vomit-textured fruit gums. But it is not as a drink that one can analyse the stuff.

Thickhead is merely a means to an end: to get pissed and feel iconoclastic. For Thickhead is designed to be swallowed by the gull-

ible who, its concoctors hope, will then regard the stuff as a symbol — rather like liquidised Beavis and Butt-head.

Thickhead would like to be the silver stud punched into the lip of the kid who accompanies the washing machine. Its aim is to be the copy of *Viz* magazine con-

cealed in the pocket of the interview clothes worn by the applicant to Ballhol.

Thickhead is ambitious to be regarded as hip, classless, ugly and gauche.

Thickhead, in other words, is one more transparent package of unconventional-ity to help the conventional young to stomach the awfulness of not-yet-adulthood.

Police seize world's biggest haul of rhino horn

Duncan Campbell
Crime Correspondent

POLICE seized what was believed to be a world record haul of rhino horn yesterday. Environmentalists said it was the largest haul of rhino horn in the world.

A total of 105 horns, weighing 240 kilograms and valued at £1.6 million were seized at a news garage in Kensington, west London, by officers from the south-east regional crime squad. Rhino horn is prized in the Far East for its medicinal and alleged aphrodisiac properties.

Two men and two women from Cambridgeshire were questioned after the swoop. Rhinos are an endangered

species and trade in the horn has been illegal since 1968. One of the women was released last night.

The police worked on the month-long investigation with the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. An RSPCA spokeswoman said the haul was the world's biggest and an important breakthrough.

"There are 7,000 white and

6,000 black rhinos worldwide. This haul represents more than 1 per cent of the white rhino population."

Allan Thornton, chairman of the Environmental Investigation Agency which investigates the illegal trade from its bases in London and Washington, said the haul raised "grave concern about the degree of the trade going on through this country."

The value of rhino horn had increased as syndicates in Hong Kong, Taiwan and China bought up large quantities to boost the price, he said. Because of its scarcity, its value had risen, particularly for older members of the Chinese community, who believed in its medicinal qualities, particularly in reducing fevers.

Mr Thornton said all the ailments for which rhino

horn was used could be treated more efficiently by herbal medicine.

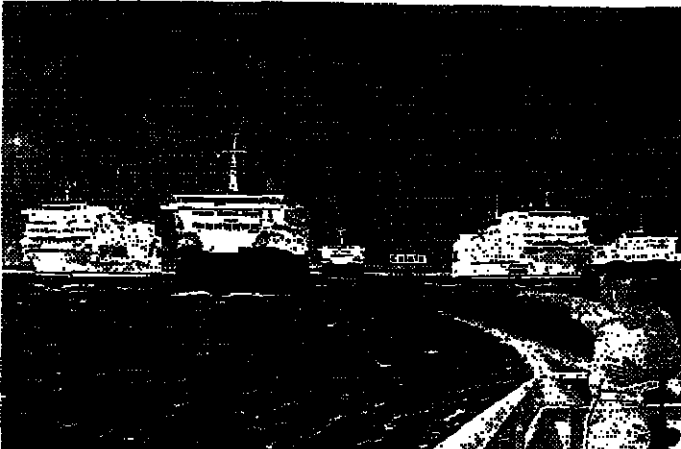
The white rhino horn is believed to have come from southern Africa. A large number of private owners of white rhinos in South Africa are believed to be tapping into the illegal trade.

Last month, police seized two kilograms of rhino horn in west London.

Cruise to Calais in comfort...

RELAX and just cruise across from Dover to Calais — the shortest sea route to France.

Large, luxurious car ferries with shops, restaurants and entertainment on board, plus hovercraft, provide rapid, comfortable crossings with a departure every thirty minutes. Fast on and off loading on both sides of the Channel helps to speed your journey. Instant motorway access from Calais port provides an open door to the entire European motorway network.



For a shopping day,
a relaxing stay or for immediate
access to motorway...

Calais

...begins with sea.

DOVER/CALAIS
OVER 140 CROSSINGS DAILY
BY P&O EUROPEAN FERRIES, STENA LINE,
SEAFRANCE & HOVERSPED.

مكتبة التجميل



Walkin', talkin', smilin', stormin'... Norma Major in her more public role yesterday at her husband's side and moving among the party faithful including Sir Michael Hirst, the Scottish Tory chairman

PHOTOGRAPHS: MURDO MLECO

Stormin' Norma braves Scots' no-fly zone

Norma Major

Age: 54

Upbringing: Brought up by her mother, Edith Wagstaff, in Bermondsey, after her father's death in a motor-cycling accident in Belgium at the end of the war.

Education: Boarding schools, then state school in Peckham, then teacher training college.

Married: 1970 to Lambeth housing chairman, John Major.

Children: Two, Elizabeth, 24, and James, 21.

Favourite charity: Mencap, which says she brings in £1 million a year.

Career: Taught domestic science and needlework. Became a nanny for Australian opera singer June Bronhill. Gave up work after marriage. Wrote a book about Joan Sutherland in 1987.

Salary: nil.

Magazine appearances: Front cover of Tatler.

Tories new strategy starts in the shadow of Queen Margaret

Erland Clouston

THE secret weapon who is going to take out the Labour Party had a moderately successful test-firing yesterday.

Norma Major, aka Roadie, amply demonstrated to Glaswegians that she is capable of supplying the extra touch of laminate that could just enable her husband to wriggle through the next general election.

A hundred second display outside and moving through the Hilton Hotel revealed the dark-suited mother of two to be an accomplished navigator of splayed-open revolving doors, and capable of holding an animated chat with the tartan-trewed chairman of the Scottish Conservative Party.

A party fundraising event in Scotland is not the ideal place to make your debut as the new First Lady; memo-

ries of Mary Queen of Scots and Margaret Thatcher have made the country a no-fly zone for pushy women.

Conscious of this, the biographer of Joan Sutherland offered only a mild extension of the traditional repertoire of the politician's consort. After her tête-à-tête with Sir Michael Hirst, and while her husband fielded questions about Iraq, the normally discreet Mrs Major overtly posed alone for a good 10 seconds, the lights from the photographers' flashguns glittering in her bobber-sized gold, or possibly gilt, earrings.

The rest of Mrs Major's outfit was more sober. The only excitement raised by her knee-length two-piece was whether it was the same suit she had worn when leaving Downing Street earlier in the day — that one having been described by fashion spies as "sort of mauve". The white blouse was flecked with in-

How 'first lady' may swing it for Major with the older generation

David Hencke

Westminster Correspondent

NORMA Major has the reputation of a woman who tells her husband the truth about what the electorate think of his policies.

A shrewd judge of character and a brilliant gladhander with the party faithful, she is said by Conservative Central Office to be the perfect consort for the grey man of politics — "a Denis Thatcher without the gin."

But experts believe that the Tories' new campaigning strategy, to use Mrs Major as a come-on to wavering voters, is quite another matter. Her main political act, after all, has been to arrange quiet shows for the party faithful in Mr Major's Huntingdon constituency.

Bob Worcester, chairman of MORI, the opinion poll organisation, believes that the Tories want Mrs Major to woo the older woman back to

Cherie Blair

Age: 41

Upbringing: Brought up in Bury, Lancashire, by her mother, Gale Smith, after her actor father, Tony Booth, walked out.

Education: State school in Liverpool, read Law at the London School of Economics (first class honours).

Married: 1980 to fellow Bar pupil Tony Blair.

Children: Three, Euan, 11, Nicky, nine, and Kathryn, six.

Career: QC and assistant recorder. Has ambitions to be judge.

Salary: £1,000 a day as an employment barrister, now £270 a day training to be recorder.

Favourite charity: On the management board of Refuge, the battered wives retreat.

Magazine appearances: Guest edited Prima, biggest selling women's monthly magazine, full of knitting patterns and budgetary tips.

Diplomat's 107 child sex tapes

Sarah Boseley

A SENIOR British diplomat was accused yesterday of smuggling more than 100 videos of child pornography into the UK. Most of them contained scenes of "pedophilic depravity", a court was told.

Robert Coghlan, aged 54, was caught when his possessions were routed from Tokyo, where he was first secretary in the information department of the British Embassy, to his new posting in Madrid, via London, Southwark crown court heard.

Customs officers discovered the 107 videos during a routine search of Mr Coghlan's belongings which had been temporarily stored in an Essex warehouse.

Mr Coghlan, from Islington, north London, who has two children and has spent 30 years in the diplomatic service, denies smuggling a quantity of "indecent or obscene material" on or about March 12 this year.

Most of the material had been bought in Japan, but the court was told. The case hinges on whether the diplomat knew the pornographic material would arrive in Britain. Nigel Litman, prosecuting, claimed Mr Coghlan had deliberately tried to conceal the presence of his illegal collection at a time when he knew his belongings were first being sent to Britain.

The barrister said he understood the defence would argue that Mr Coghlan, who had admitted knowing the material was obscene, had believed they would be despatched directly to Madrid.

The videos depicted a variety of sexual acts involving



Robert Coghlan, who denies smuggling obscene videos

either adults with children or children with children, Mr Litman said. Although they showed the "tragic and humiliating abuse" of children, the jury would have to try to look at them "objectively". The jury of five women and seven men later spent an hour watching extracts.

The diplomat was arrested last March. Mr Litman said Mr Coghlan had admitted that many of the "homosexual pornography" videos had been bought in Japan, but he insisted he was not interested in "watching young kids".

Mr Litman added: "He made it quite clear that he recognised children he had seen on the videos were aged 12 or 13 and thought they were rather young."

The Crown's case would feature a Customs form called a C3, a declaration signed by the owner of goods being sent to Britain, as to whether they contained anything regarded as illegal. Mr Coghlan, said counsel, completed the pertinent part of the document with the word "none".

The case continues.

Express discards sole female editor

Maggie Brown

SUE Douglas, the only female editor of a national newspaper, resigned yesterday from her £275,000 a year post at the helm of the Sunday Express after eight tumultuous months.

Insiders said she had paid the price for imposing revolution rather than evolution on the decaying title, scaring male middle-aged readers away with provocative columnists and misjudged headlines.

Her regime will be remembered for the shock of a front page splash last April, "A bunch of shits", claiming to quote John Major on other European leaders during a summit meeting — rather than for the new sports section and magazine with which she tried to pep up the paper and appeal to younger readers.

The former deputy editor of the Sunday Times, aged 39, was toppled after returning from a sabbatical holiday in Scotland and was yesterday negotiating a pay-off expected to approach £400,000.

Those who had spoken to her report that she was resentful at the way her hard work was being downplayed. She also dismissed suggestions that she might wish to move into the Channel 5 or television arm of M&A, the parent company.

The Daily and Sunday Express, both selling about 1.2 million copies and urgently seeking readers after 25 years of decline, are being merged into a single editorial team, under Richard Addis, editor of the Daily Express.

A former monk and Daily Mail features executive, he



Sue Douglas: 'paid price for revolutionary changes'

has energetically revamped the Daily Express while working with the grain of the paper he inherited, managed to stabilise its circulation free fall and has emerged as its pivotal editorial force.

About 85 jobs, equivalent to the staff of the Sunday paper, are being axed, saving around £4 million, as production is merged.

The weak sister paper, the tabloid Daily Star, is unaffected by the changes. Seven-day operations are common in the United States and some European countries and have been flirted with at the Daily and Sunday Telegraph and Independent on Sunday. But they have yet to prove workable in Britain where Sunday papers have personalities of their own.

Sir David English, chairman of Associated Newspapers, whose Daily Mail and Mail on Sunday dominate the middle market in which Express titles have to sell, said: "They will be going against the newspaper culture of this country."

I heard a former British ambassador to Iraq tell the Today programme why an all-out war against Saddam Hussein might be undesirable. Massive loss of civilian life, Sir John Moberly explained, "would not be helpful in the long term".

Up to £150 paid for your credit cards.

We'll pay you up to £150 to switch from Access, VISA, MasterCard, Amex or store cards.

If you've got up to £3,000 outstanding on credit cards or store cards, switch to Barclaycard. Subject to approval, we'll credit you with 5% of your outstanding balance immediately.

So, on a balance of £1,000 we'll give you £50, and on a balance of £3,000 you'll get the full £150. Plus you'll enjoy the unique benefits that only Britain's most popular credit card can give you.

Simply call 0800 49 29 29, quoting 166 EDOX or return the coupon and we'll send you full written details.

Please send me full written details on this offer and an application form.

I wish to transfer a balance from another credit card(s) to my new Barclaycard.

Mr/Ms/Ms/Ms First Name(s) _____
Surname _____
Address _____
Postcode _____ Telephone (area) _____
New send to Barclaycard, FREEPOST BS 4335, Bristol, BS1 7YX.
NO OBLIGATION NO STAMP REQUIRED

CLAIM UP TO £150
0800 49 29 29
CALL NOW AND QUOTE 166 EDOX

BARCLAYCARD

John Moberly

News in brief

Family's appeal to student's killer

RELATIVES of the student who died after stepping in to help a distressed girl in a city street, last night urged his attacker to give himself up. Andrew Poynton, aged 22, was punched by a young man after he went to aid the sobbing girl in Manchester early on Saturday. He fell, fracturing his skull, and died yesterday in Manchester Royal Infirmary after brain surgery.

As his parents and his girlfriend Susan Gilbert, 20, comforted each other at the family home in Stockport, Manchester, his sister Deborah, 30, urged his attacker to come forward.

"He unfortunately has to live with the consequences of his actions, as we do," she said. "We know it was just pure bad luck that the consequences were as severe as they were."

"We are sorry the whole regrettable incident happened. But for his own sake he should just come forward and clear his conscience."

Andrew's parents, who were at his bedside with Susan when he died, agreed that his heart and other organs should be donated for transplants.

Police are seeking a man with cropped blond hair, about 5ft 10in and skintny. He had a thin face and square jaw and wore a long-sleeved shirt or jumper. He walked away with the girl, who had been crying.

Vicar leaves £1m

ASHY former vicar has stunned his local villagers by leaving more than £1 million in his will. The Rev Dennis Bennett lived a simple life with his sister in their modest home at Wrington, near Bristol.

Few people knew that the former naval chaplain and vicar of Christ Church, at nearby Redhill, had inherited a fortune from his businessman father, a builder's merchant. When he retired in 1976 he continued to lead a quiet life in the village where he was a popular figure.

One of his pleasures was a nightly visit to the White Hart public house, at nearby Congresbury, for two halves of best bitter, paid for with change from his purse.

Landlord Ken Taylor said: "In the three years I have had the pub he never once brought a round. I could not believe it when I learned he was a millionaire. I would never have guessed it in a million years."

Mr Bennett left £1,026,005. The bulk of his estate went to his sister Joyce, with bequests to charities and local churches.

Executive 'flirted with boy'

A BUSINESS executive who says her career was ended by the trauma of being a strip-tease victim, once boasted at work that she wanted to "make a man of" a young store-room boy. It was claimed at a tribunal yesterday. Gail Steele flirted with Seamus Healy and danced with him while he held a banana in a provocative way at an office party, the Central London industrial tribunal heard.

Mr Healy, aged 25, now inventory manager for optical firm Optika of Harrow, Middlesex, told the panel it did not cross his mind that Miss Steele, 44, would be offended by the Strip-tease.

Miss Steele, of Baron's Court, west London, married with two children, is claiming unfair dismissal and sexual discrimination by Optika where she was a £20,000-a-year director.

The stripper posed as a job applicant on February 9 last year, and, in front of other staff, handcuffed her, stripped off and slung her over his shoulder. The hearing continues today.

Law suit threat to duchess

THE Duchess of York has been threatened with a £2 million law suit over an attempt to block a book about her affair with John Bryan, it emerged yesterday.

Publisher Michael O'Mara said he feared she was trying to delay the potentially damaging book by Allan Starkie so her autobiography, due on sale this autumn, would have a greater chance of success.

"I have warned the duchess that my company will be seeking damages from her of £2 million if Dr Starkie's book is wrongly delayed by her actions," Mr O'Mara said.

At a preliminary hearing on Friday, a High Court injunction granted to the duchess to prevent publication of Dr Starkie's *Fergie: Her Secret Life*, was extended for at least a further two weeks pending a full court hearing.

Tory treasurer in Japanese-backed consortium buying MoD homes

David Horock
Westminster Correspondent

MICHAEL Portillo is to sell the Ministry of Defence's 83,000 homes for £1.6 billion to a consortium of Japanese-backed financiers and a bank whose chairman is the Conservative Party.

The deal, leaked by the ministry on the day of the Iraqi bombings, was immediately condemned by Labour's defence spokesman, David Clark, who believes it will bring rich pickings for the

party treasurer, and the Royal Bank of Scotland, whose chairman is Lord Younger of Prestonkirk, the former defence secretary, whose clients include the Conservative Party.

Sources disclosed that the vast majority of the finance involved would be arranged by the British partners in the consortium.

Mr Clark said: "It is scandalous and disgraceful that the homes of servicemen are to be sold off to line the pockets of Tory party donors. This is yet another example of sleazy deals from this government."

The Ministry of Defence said: "We have today selected one of the four shortlisted bidders as the preferred purchaser for the married quarters estate."

"Negotiations will begin with that consortium with a view to achieving an exchange of contracts in the next few weeks."

The MoD will lease back the properties from Arrington Homes under a 20-year deal.

Some £100 million will be released from the sale to upgrade the homes, while 2,500 will be sold off. More properties will be released over a 25-year period.

Nomura has in recent weeks taken a back seat in an attempt to quell the outcry among politicians and parts of the armed forces.

Sir Thomas Macpherson, a businessman and former soldier who has worked closely with the MoD in recent years, was recruited as chairman of the consortium.

Retired Air Vice Marshal Sandy Hunter, a former commander of British forces in Cyprus, was brought in as deputy chairman.

Defence sources said that the MoD was impressed with the consortium's approach in support of partnership. Criticism last night also came from Cyril Townsend, Conservative MP for Bexleyheath, who has strenuously opposed the sale.

He said: "I still strongly disapprove of the arrangements for the sale. Service families are by no means satisfied."

Arthur Titherington, secretary of the Japanese Labour Camp Survivors Association said: "I am almost speechless. It seems to me at times that certain senior members of the Government have no feelings about the past."

"The Japanese are succeeding to do with money what they failed to do with arms."

The parents of drowned children tell of million 'if onlys' going through their minds



Kevin Loughlin and Lynette Thornton hold hands as they face the press. Right, their children, Jodi and Tom, whose bodies were found on the Norfolk coast



"With the best will in the world I don't think there is a parent in the whole country who can honestly say they keep their eye on their children at every moment"

Maggie O'Kane

FOUR-year-old Tom Loughlin was to have his first day at school today but instead his parents are preparing for his funeral. He is to be buried with his sister, Jodi, aged six, in the next few days.

The parents of the two children, who drowned on holiday in Norfolk, said yesterday they were bracing themselves for a traumatic return home without them. Their bodies were washed up about 30 miles from Holme beach, near Hunstanton, where they disappeared on August 18. Jodi's body was found last Friday and Tom's on Sunday.

Speaking to the media yesterday, Kevin Loughlin and Lynette Thornton, said their plans were to go home to Norwich, south London, and try to lead a normal life — "whatever normal is now; I am not sure what it is," said Mr Loughlin.

There was some consolation in the fact that the bodies had been found and the uncertainty was over. The worst part had been the waiting and not knowing.

"They were very close," he

said. "They played together all the time. At least they have died together. They have not suffered, and we can give them a decent burial."

The couple, who were composed throughout their interview, said they had since discovered that the tide at Holms was particularly high when the children vanished and that there were strong currents offshore.

Ms Thornton said the sea had appeared so shallow and calm when they arrived: "We were duped by it."

Mr Loughlin said the couple had paid the highest price for taking their eyes off them for a few minutes.

"With the best will in the world I don't think there is a parent in the whole country who can honestly say they keep their eye on their children at every moment," Mr Loughlin said.

The couple had been swamped with cards, flowers and goodwill messages from the people of Norfolk and

throughout the country during the "emotional nightmare" of the past two weeks.

"It comes and goes: sometimes we felt desperate; other times it doesn't feel so bad," said Mr Loughlin. "Before Jodi's body turned up last Friday we were both hopeful that they would be found safe and well. Since Friday it has been difficult."

He said they took comfort from the fact that the children's last moments alive were spent on the beach: "It does help a little to think that they were having fun. They were happy."

It had been hard to return to their holiday cottages on the day they vanished, he said.

"We had got the children's things around — games, Jodi's teddy and other little bits and pieces."

"A million 'if onlys' have been going through our minds: if only we had gone straight into the water with them; if only we had gone to the beach."

BIG
savings rates.

	£500-£4,999	£5,000-£9,999	£10,000-£24,999	£25,000-£49,999	£50,000-£99,999
Direct Line Instant Access Account	4.50%	4.75%	5.50%	5.65%	5.75%
Halifax Solid Gold (90 Day Notice)	2.75%	3.05%	3.80%	4.30%	4.50%
Woolwich Premier 90 (90 Day Notice)	N/A	3.10%	3.85%	4.60%	4.85%
Yorkshire Building Society Key 90 Plus	N/A	N/A	4.20%	4.65%	5.15%

All rates are gross* and correct at 21st August 1996.

Are your savings growing too slowly? Then you should be saving with Direct Line. Take a look at the table and you'll see that our rates are higher than these building society 90 day accounts. What's more, with Direct Line you don't have to give 90 days notice because we offer instant access. So if you want more money for your money you know who to call.

0181 667 1121 LONDON **0161 833 1121 MANCHESTER** **0141 221 1121 GLASGOW**

CALL ANYTIME 8am to 8pm Monday to Friday and 9am to 5pm Saturday. Please quote ref. GA11
Internet address: <http://www.directline.co.uk>

DIRECT LINE SAVINGS

*Savings provided by Direct Line Financial Services Limited, 250 St Vincent Street, Glasgow, G2 5SH, a member of the Deposit Protection Scheme established under the Banking Act 1987 (as amended). Payments under the scheme are limited to 90% of a depositor's total deposits subject to a maximum payment to any one depositor of £18,000 (or ECU 26,500 if greater). Further details of the Scheme are available on request. *The gross rate is the rate paid without the deduction of income tax. All rates shown are subject to variable and are based on annual payments of interest. For your added security, all telephone calls will be recorded and the recording kept secure. We may also monitor telephone calls with the aim of improving our services to you. *Direct Line and the red telephone on wheels are the trademarks of Direct Line Insurance plc and used with the permission of Direct Line Insurance plc.*

100mph rail youth given probation

Lawrence Donegan

A TEENAGER who became obsessed with railways and tricked his way into taking control of commuter trains was yesterday punished for impersonating a train driver.

Magistrates in Margate, Kent, sentenced Nicholas Gray, aged 18, to two years probation and ordered him to do 100 hours community service after hearing he had posed as a train driver and driven commuter trains between London and Kent at speeds of up to 100 mph.

The court was told Mr Gray, of Margate, had kept his train driver's outfit after finishing two weeks work experience at London Bridge and Horn Hill stations, London. He was so plausible that rail staff believed he was a trainee and helped "teach" him how to drive trains. He sold tickets, acted as a platform attendant and a cleaner for over five months, magistrates heard.

His deception was uncovered only when an inspector questioned him about a fire on a train at Faversham, Kent.

Mr Gray admitted obtaining free journeys from the South Eastern train company by posing as an employee between January and June, 1996; stealing a driver's bag; entering a train's cabin; driving a train and stealing train safety equipment.

He told the court he had informed staff he was a trainee doing "route knowledge". "They would tell me to hop in and then let me drive it myself some of the time. When they left the cabin to go to the lavatory, I would be completely on my own," he said.

After the hearing, Mr Gray said: "I would like to apologise to anyone on my train, but I don't think they would have known there was anything unusual as they had a smooth ride."

A South Eastern Train Operating Company spokesman said last night a failure in security procedures had allowed Mr Gray's deception. "We have reminded staff of the need to adhere absolutely to our safety systems to ensure their effectiveness in the future," he said.

Wherever you Break Down in the UK we can reach you quickly

from just **£29.50*** per year

JOIN TODAY CALL FREE
FREE INFORMATION PACK
0800 000 111

*Plus a once only enrolment fee of £9.50 waived if you join by Direct Debit. Cars registered before 31/7/87 are subject to additional fee of £19.50.

Post today No stamp needed
TO: GREEN FLAG National Breakdown, FREEPOST, Leeds, West Yorkshire LS99 2GF. Please send me the INFORMATION PACK.

NAME (Mr/Mrs/Ms/Ms)
HOME TEL.
ADDRESS
COUNTY POST CODE C4488

Jodi, is it?

Seaside resort tries to draw a veil over bare fleshed cheek

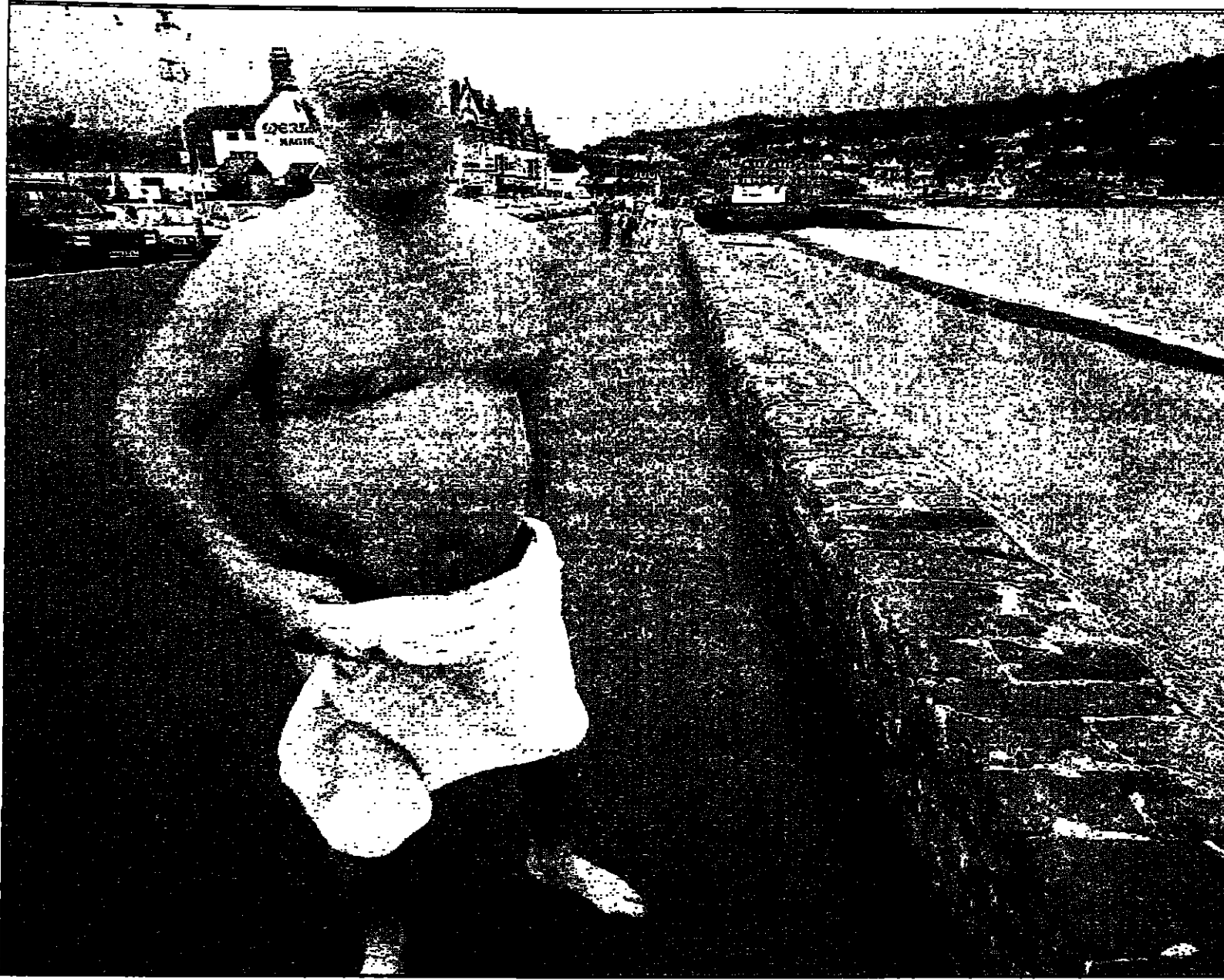
Stuart Millar on a cover-up crusade

WHEN the Great Fire of Minehead destroyed 70 buildings and left countless families homeless in 1791, the London press described the disaster as a "deplorable public calamity". More than 200 years later, the Somerset seaside resort is struggling to deal with a different sort of calamity: scantily-clad tourists.

Sickened by the sight of wobbling flesh in the historic high street, a group of residents is demanding that the town become the first in Britain to make visitors — especially those carrying extra pounds — cover up.

They say that the overweight exhibitionists offend other visitors and send out the wrong sort of message about the town. The English and West Country tourist boards have backed their campaign.

Minehead, more famous as the birthplace of the science fiction novelist Arthur C. Clarke, has been a resort for more than a century. On the Bristol



I've had a bellyful... Indignant holidaymakers accuse Minehead residents of snobbery in wanting to impose more decorum

PHOTOGRAPH: SEAN SMITH

Channel coast, at the gateway to the Exmoor National Park, it is a mecca for daytrippers and walkers.

But residents claim that the town's peaceful image and West Country sensibilities are under threat. "It seems the more flesh they carry, the more they want to expose it," said Malcolm Robinson, one of the campaigners. "I know some people cannot help being fat, but if I were in that category I would not want people to see what I looked like undressed." Mr Robinson

accepted that tourists strip off on the beach, but insisted a simple shopping trip in the resort had become a "sickening" experience.

But there are deeper motives to the campaign. In the early 1960s, Minehead became home to the flagship of the Butlin's empire, now called Somerwest World and the largest holiday camp in Europe. With working class families escaping the city and flocking there for summer holidays ever since, the camp has become the lifeblood of the

local tourist industry. Now hoteliers are keen to recapture Minehead's sedate, pre-Butlin's past, and place the town in the middle class market. Covering up low-income flesh is the first step.

"I don't think you can dispute that Minehead has lost its way," said Malcolm Higgins, owner of the Wyndcott Hotel and secretary of the residents' association.

With £350,000 marketing funding from Europe, he envisages Minehead as the capital of the Exmoor

region. "We want Minehead to be where it always should have been, but that's very difficult with the identity we have."

Encouraging visitors to cover up when shopping will help the process of reinvention, he said. "It may sound snobbish, but I firmly believe corpses should be covered when they are not on the beach. We are not being staid — we want everyone to come here — but they have to show respect."

Beneath an unfriendly September sky yesterday,

the last visitors of the season were braving a stiff sea breeze to squeeze the last few days out of summer. Wandering in and out of the amusement arcades and ice cream shops along the seafront, they were unimpressed by the plan.

"Who do they think they are?" asked David Marston, visiting from Swansea. "People want to relax on holiday, not be told what to do by a bunch of snobs." One seafront trader agreed: "I don't care what they wear, as they long as they spend money."

Mawhinney attacks Labour's tactics

Michael White on the Tory chairman's angry riposte after accusations of lying

WHEN the Conservative chairman Brian Mawhinney turned up for an interview at Radio 4's Today studio yesterday he carried a file of Labour "negative campaign" tactics from last year's Littleborough and Saddleworth byelection.

In the event Dr Mawhinney was unable to use cuttings which party officials had prepared, but he did unleash a fierce attack on Tony Blair for demanding a clean election fight in the coming months while indulging in undocumented accusations of Tory lies.

Officials at Tory headquarters in Westminster later offered five examples of such "lies" to the Guardian to warrant their chairman's protest. Labour's basic counter-argument is that their attacks are based on the 17-year Tory record, whereas — apart from fading memories of the 1978/79 Winter of Discontent — Dr Mawhinney's team relies on vague fears, distortion and tabloid scare-mongering.

The Tories do not deny using negative advertising techniques themselves, and plan to use — and justify — their "demon eyes" campaign. What infuriates them is that, despite Labour's complaints, Mr Blair's campaign techniques are every bit as bad, they claim.

On Sunday the Labour leader used a Breakfast with Frost interview on BBC1 to say that since John Major was "a half decent bloke" he should call off his unscrupulous campaign attacks. Yesterday the Tory chairman said he would go further.

"Mr Blair is an honest man, he's not satanic, he's not demonic, he's none of these things. But in policy terms he's wrong," and the Tories would go on saying so.

What was more, "this nice Mr Blair goes around conducting some of the dirtiest campaigning against the Prime Minister and against this Government that this country has ever seen", Dr Mawhinney said.

He upended Labour complaints to claim that it had been Mr Blair who had rejected Mr Major's plea for a "more elevated" public debate after John Smith's death in 1994.

As proof of Labour hypocrisy in the controversy the Tories cite such cases as personal attacks against the successful Liberal Democrat candidate, Peter Davies, at Littleborough and Saddleworth, by Labour's

byelection team. They also focused on his call for a public debate on legalisation of cannabis.

Allegations that the Conservatives rely on negative ads, like New Labour, New Danger while Labour is more positive, were wrong. In fact, the Tories also promote positive government policies while Labour has only one, New Life for Britain, say the Tories.

They claim Mr Blair himself repeatedly mouths the slogan Same Old Tories, Same Old Lies, without substantiating what he means. Labour's party political broadcast during the spring local elections showed a giant stepping on people's homes, schools and hospitals.

It was also used as a poster in which the giant's huge hands staged a "Tory tax squeeze".

Mr Blair frequently calls the Government "fundamentally corrupt", and uses his party conference speeches to say they have debased politics. The claim that promise made by the Tories has been broken was "excessive hyperbole", one Tory official complained yesterday.

Repeated Labour attacks on Mr Major at Question Time were led by Mr Blair. The Prime Minister is accused of being in "leaze up to his neck" and of being "weak, unprincipled and directionless".

Ironically, this sort of language is precisely the sort of thing Thatcherite MPs use in private about Mr Major. Dr Mawhinney said yesterday he was standing by his declared aim in taking the chairmanship, to "stick to what is on record".

Thus the use of "demon eyes" — a term invented by Mr Mandelson, he noted — over Mr Blair's face in three newspaper ads was supported by extracts from Clare Short's New Statesman interview in which she spoke of "people who live in the dark" who work around Mr Blair.

"The ad tore away Tony Blair's eyes and behind it you saw dark forces," said one official, who pointed out that the eyes had been used in a Tory party broadcast six weeks ago, peering through shop windows, bank cash machines and from behind Big Ben.

At the time one former Tory cabinet minister said any party which used it deserved a spell in opposition. But, unlike Ms Short, he said so privately and not in the New Statesman.

Computer error leaves 10,000 without benefit

David Brindle, Social Services Correspondent

MORE than 10,000 of the poorest benefit claimants have been left without money this week because of a blunder by social security computer technicians.

The error occurred during

reprogramming of the income support computer system. It left benefit offices unable to process any claims on two days last week.

Officials last night said they were making every effort to rectify the problems. They hoped to get money to people affected by the end of the week.

The income support com-

puter system was taken out of commission over the August bank holiday weekend to reprogram it for jobseeker's allowance, the new benefit that comes into effect next month.

The system was due to be back on line by Tuesday morning last week, but it remained out of action for all of Tuesday and part of

Wednesday. Local benefit offices could not initiate new claims or amend existing ones.

It emerged this week, furthermore, that a problem caused during the reprogramming had affected the computer's capacity to make weekly payments by credit transfer to claimants' bank or building society accounts.

Before the problem was spotted, 11,500 claimants paid through 30 benefit offices had lost out on payments due on Monday. The offices have been notified, but a Benefits Agency spokeswoman was unable to say whether the claimants were being contacted.

Income support is the safety-net benefit paid to the poorest claimants. Those who receive it by credit transfer are long-term recipients, including pensioners and younger people considered incapable of work.

The spokeswoman said: "We are sorry for the inconvenience this has caused customers. If they want urgent help, they should contact their local office, which will be able to make emergency payments to them."

Welfare advisers are appalled at the blunder. They say the Benefits Agency encourages long-term claimants to elect to receive their payments by credit transfer as an

easier and — for the agency — cheaper option. Bernard Schneider, an adviser with The Rights Shop in Tower Hamlets, east London, said: "The worst thing about this is that people will not know they have not received their money unless they check — or until their bank tells them they have gone overdrawn."

"We only found out about this because somebody came in off the street and said their payment had not turned up."

A spokeswoman for the Information Technology Services Agency, which runs the Benefits Agency's computers, said it was aiming to arrange credits for the 11,000 claimants before the weekend.

ARGENTINE REPUBLIC

NATIONAL STATE MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR

(Ministerio del Interior)

Public, National and International Bid

No 01/96

Full, indivisible contract of a service for the design, start up and support of a System of Migration Control and Identification of Individuals and of electoral information.

Interested parties may ask for information and purchase bid specifications of Subsecretaría de Población (Under Secretariat of Population) of the Ministry of Interior, at Avenida Leandro N. Alem 168 - 5º Piso - Capital Federal, from Monday to Friday from 12:00 noon to 4:00 AM as of the 30th day of August of the year 1996.

Value of the Bid Specifications: eighty thousand pesos (\$80,000).

Bids shall be received at the Subsecretaría de Población of the Ministry of the Interior, located at Avenida Leandro N. Alem 168 - 5º Piso - Capital Federal, until 12:00 noon of the 25th day of October of the year 1996.

The opening of bids shall be carried out the same day at 1:00 PM at the Subsecretaría de Población of the Ministry of the Interior.

Fifth suicide at Scottish jail

Erland Clouston

THE management of Scotland's principal women's prison is likely to come under renewed scrutiny following the apparent suicide of a fifth prisoner there in the past 15 months.

Staff found Denise Devine, aged 26, dead in her cell in the remand wing of Cornton Vale prison, near Stirling, yesterday morning. Ms Devine, from Leith, was awaiting trial on two charges of breach of bail, and an offence under the Carrying of Knives (Scotland) Act.

The Scottish Prison Service would not confirm a Scottish Ambulance Service report that she had hanged herself.

Alarm at the level of suicide in Scottish penal institutions has prompted the SPS to commission two reports on strategies for combating a trend which saw 16 of Scotland's 5,600 prisoners kill themselves in 1994. Last year the figure dropped to 10, but this is still ahead of the English and Welsh ratio of 60 out of 51,047 inmates.

The SPS is considering a draft report by Kevin Power, of Stirling University, into the problem. It follows a long list of recommendations presented by John Gunn of the Institute of Psychiatry. One of these, that every prison be equipped with a psychiatric ward staffed 24 hours a day, has been rejected on grounds of cost.

Particular concern has focused on the vulnerability of untried women prisoners. The last four suicides at Cornton Vale, which houses all 200 of Scotland's female prisoners, and most of those held on remand, came into this category. Ms Devine was admitted only a fortnight ago.

The level of surveillance is complicated by civil liberty arguments, and the difficulty of predicting suicidal behaviour. "It's not fair to keep people under constant inspection for weeks at a time," said the SPS spokesman. One of the women who hanged herself last year had been sunbathing and joking with fellow inmates a few hours earlier.

Stirling council, whose area includes Cornton Vale, last night called formally for an independent public inquiry into the deaths.

In 1964, Gene Roddenberry, a former airline pilot turned freelance TV writer-producer, pitched an idea to the network NBC. His one-line sell was "Wagon Train to the stars".

Mark Lawson

G2 page 4

Which airline has more connections

from New York/ Newark than any other?

backed
ies

ough

over you need
in the UK we
each you exactly
£29.50 per year
TODAY CALL FREE
INFORMATION PACK
0 000 111

IRAQ CRISIS: Iran may pose greater regional threat • Air curbs warning scorned • Traders tear up forecasts

US gameplan is shot full of holes as

The White House/Clinton lacks George Bush's diplomatic flair, Martin Walker argues

FOR a relatively modest military return, and a somewhat bigger political pay-off in the US opinion polls, President Bill Clinton has taken some breathtaking risks in punishing Iraq with his Nato allies, with the Gulf war coalition and with Russia.

While Mr Clinton can claim to be dealing with the unfinished business of his predecessor, George Bush, he has yet to show himself anything like as skilled in rallying and keeping together an international coalition against Saddam Hussein as his predecessor did.

And yesterday's air strikes have emphasised the contradictions in US policy and the absence of a coherent strategy for the future. The flimsy Clinton policy of "dual containment" of Iran and Iraq, always illogical, has been exposed. The more the US strikes to weaken Iraq, the more it strengthens the regional weight of Iran, which may in the long run be a far greater strategic menace to US allies and interests in the region.

Were it not for the noxious presence of President Saddam as Iraq's leader, the US would be counting on Iraq as a counterweight, if not an ally, against Iran.

This week, as five years ago when the way to Baghdad lay open to Gulf coalition forces, the US and its allies have reluctantly accepted that maintaining Iraq's political

cohesion is a greater strategic priority than toppling President Saddam.

The biggest threat to US interests is not a new Iraqi strike at the Kuwait and Saudi oilfields, which can be stopped with the US armour already in place in Kuwait and Qatar. It is the extension of Iranian influence through its new Kurdish allies in northern Iraq. They could give Iran direct overland access to its Syrian friends, and the ability to supply directly its Hizbullah clients in Lebanon, sharply increasing the threat to Israel.

Mr Clinton is on weak legal ground in citing United Nations Resolution 688 as his mandate. He claims that the resolution gives the US and its allies the right to protect Iraq's ethnic minorities, and he accused President Saddam yesterday of "unleashing the Iraqi army against the civilian population of Irbil".

But there is no legal constraint against Iraq moving ground troops into the declared "no-fly zone" of northern Iraq, north of the 36th parallel. And in the wake of Iranian troop movements in support of the Kurdish faction led by Jalal Talabani last month, Iraq could claim some justification for its move into Irbil.

"We provided logistical support to Massoud Barzani

(Mr Talabani's rival), who invited us to support him against Iranian-backed pressure," Iraq's deputy prime minister Tariq Aziz told CNN yesterday. "What we did was a positive, responsible, limited operation to help our people... and we had already withdrawn our troops from Irbil when we were attacked."

When America's ally Turkey invaded the Kurdish territory in northern Iraq last year, in an attempt to strike at the bases of PKK Kurdish guerrillas, there was no military response from Mr Clinton. French officials have cited this precedent as a factor in their reluctance to back Mr Clinton's air strikes.

US officials played down the apparent disarray of the old Gulf war coalition yesterday. "They may not say so in

public, but our allies in the region expect the US to behave as the superpower, as the security guarantor, in a very 'unusual region,'" one White House official told the Guardian yesterday.

But the outright denunciation of the US attack by Russia and the Arab League yesterday contrasts sharply with 1990-91, when diplomatic preparations were carefully made by President Bush and his secretary of state, James Baker. They secured an international mandate at the UN, and deployed a multinational coalition — which included Syrian, Egyptian and French troops — to liberate Kuwait.

Domestically, Mr Clinton had to show military resolve in the face of Iraqi provocation and Republican taunts. The first opinion polls taken by the Clinton re-election campaign yesterday found more than 80 per cent support. In his brief statement to the nation yesterday, Mr Clinton

New attack on Kurds unlikely, say analysts

Richard Norton-Taylor

SADDAM HUSSEIN has achieved his immediate objectives in northern Iraq and is unlikely in the short term to mount further attacks against Kurds opposed to his regime, Western intelligence sources said yesterday.

He is more likely to act

against UN personnel in Iraq — possibly using them as hostages — and to try to lure allied aircraft into the new "no-fly zone" which reaches close to the southern suburbs of Baghdad, they said.

Allied aircraft patrolling the zone were vulnerable to attack.

Although the Republican Guards have left the Kurdish city of Irbil, now under the control of the Kurdistan Democratic Party, Iraqi security troops almost certainly remain there, said the sources.

The guards have moved south-east and are close to Chamchamal, a town on the road to Sulaymaniyah, a stronghold of the Iran-backed Patriotic Union of Kurdistan.

Baghdad helmsman scorns 'cowardly act'

The war of words/As the Iraqi leader voices defiance his adversary stands by his 'blunt message', writes Derek Brown

SADDAM HUSSEIN responded to the military attack with a bravura performance of defiance laced with bombast.

"Once again the humiliated and lowly Americans have come to perpetrate their often-repeated cowardly act by hiding behind technological development," he told the Iraqi people.

Dressed in his field-marshal's uniform, the Iraqi leader delivered his speech to national radio and television in his deadpan style.

"The aggressors have come again with their cowardly and humiliating raid to register for themselves the third cursed comeback along with what they deserve for the debasement of their aggressive weapons," he said. "But the raid will be full of sublime meaning for the noble Iraqis and their courageous stands and great steadfastness."

"The missile aggression

started at 9am of the morning of September 3 1996. It will be a glorious day the Iraqi people will write down, in the name of the Almighty, in their chronicle of great honour. For the aggressors it will be a day of cursing in history as well as on the level of the globe, following the curse that has befallen them from God."

He did not refer to President Clinton's extension of the southern "no-fly" zone, but said his forces would now ignore air restrictions imposed after the 1991 Gulf war, and attack US and allied aircraft.

"You men of the air defence and balloons of the skies, consider from now their damned imaginary lines north of the 36th parallel and south of the 32nd parallel non-existent."

"Hit back with capability and efficiency, relying on God the Almighty, [at] any hostile plane the aggressors fly to violate the airspace of



Iraqi women carrying banners, placards and a huge portrait of Saddam Hussein take part in a street demonstration in Baghdad yesterday against the US missile strikes. PHOTOGRAPH: FAHRENHEIT

Turmoil for oil traders

The markets/ Paul Murphy reports on the confusion on the exchanges

FURIOUS trading on the world's petroleum exchanges accompanied news of the cruise missile attack on Iraq.

While dealers at the International Petroleum Exchange in London have been anticipating an outbreak of hostilities, news of the raids sent the price of Brent crude surging by more than 80 cents to \$23-a-barrel (\$15 a barrel) — the highest level since the spring.

Prices slipped back later in the day, but traders remained aware that many oil industry analysts are having to tear up their short- and medium-term forecasts.

After yesterday's raids, City observers noted that whatever the political rhetoric and whether or not relations with Iraq are quickly repaired, the food for oil plan will not now be implemented for several months.

"The UN just will not be sending people in on the ground. At the very least there will be worries over safety, about human shields and the like. The repercussions of this morning's raids will last for months," an analyst said.

As part of the plan, which was adopted after Iraq finally accepted UN Resolution 686 and gave up the claim that it represented an unwarranted intrusion into its sovereign affairs, UN personnel were to monitor oil sales and organise humanitarian relief in Iraq, including its Kurdish areas.

The partial oil sale could be delayed for some time simply because the UN is not willing to risk its monitors on the ground while tensions are so high," the commodity traders Gervard & National said. "They could be used as hostages. However, the UN has made it clear that the oil sale is purely to relieve humanitarian suffering and should not be directly linked to Saddam's latest actions."

New threat to aid

The UN/Mark Tran in New York reports on uncertainty about the food for oil plan, which has been put on indefinite hold

THERE was uncertainty yesterday about the United Nations plan for Iraq to sell limited quantities of oil for food as the United States insisted on changes to the original scheme.

Edward Guehne, the US special envoy to the UN, said conditions in the memorandum of understanding signed by Iraq and the UN in May had changed and needed to be reopened.

President Clinton made it clear yesterday that the oil for food plan will be on hold indefinitely until Saddam Hussein retreats from the area.

"Irbil, the city seized by the Iraqis, is a key distribution centre for this aid. Until we

are sure these humanitarian supplies can actually get to those who need them, the UN cannot go forward and the Iraqi government will be denied the new resources it has been expecting," he said.

Boutros Boutros-Ghali, the UN secretary-general, suspended implementation of the oil for food plan at the weekend, citing concern for the safety of UN personnel. UN food and oil monitors were about to be deployed just as his staff on Saturday morning.

But there are serious questions about the plan's future now that the Americans want to reopen the painstakingly negotiated agreement.

"Conditions are fluid," said the UN spokeswoman, Sylvia Foa.

"Our concerns are totally on the deterioration of security and when the dust settles we can look at the technicalities."

The US dragged its feet on the oil for food plan and only gave its blessing in early August when the monitoring procedures were tightened considerably.

US insistence on reopening the negotiations is certain to displease Turkey, which was counting on being paid for the use of its oil pipelines. France and Russia are also likely to take a dim view.

Meanwhile, only Britain rallied to America's side in the Security Council when the US cited UN resolution 688 as legal justification for its missile strike.

France and Russia strongly disputed the US right to launch an attack under the diplomatic cover of the UN.

Grudging nod for Lebed's deal

David Hearst in Moscow

A PERMANENT end to hostilities in Chechnya moved a step closer yesterday when the Russian prime minister, Viktor Chernomyrdin, grudgingly gave his assent to the peace plan devised by his political rival, General Alexander Lebed.

This paved the way for the approval of President Boris Yeltsin, who has so far refused to meet Gen Lebed in person and has kept silent about his claims of "peace in our time".

Mr Chernomyrdin said the agreements signed by Gen Lebed and the rebel Chechen chief of staff, Aslan Maskhadov, early on Saturday morning "caused some concern but on the whole we consider them right".

Speaking in Malchik in the north Caucasus, he went on: "We should act within the framework of these agreements and keep to their thrust."

These comments are important because without the backing of the Kremlin the legal status of Gen Lebed's signature on the agreements

is far from clear. He is only a presidential adviser, with limited executive powers of his own.

The document was an "agreement in principle" with the rebel Chechens, the main provision of which was a delay resolution of Chechnya's political status for five years.

As Gen Lebed posed triumphantly for the cameras wearing a hat, cape and sword from the Caucasus, Russian nationalists were infuriated at the power the agreement has apparently given the Chechen separatists.

Sergei Baburin, vice-speaker of the Duma, and head of a nationalist faction, said the deal contradicted the constitution and could not be undertaken without the consent of state organs of power.

Attention now focuses on what role the rebels will have in the provisional government. Doku Zavgayev, head of the pro-Moscow government

News in brief

Belgian police find bodies of girls buried in garden
BELGIAN police digging for the remains of missing children in the back garden of a house at Jumet near the southern city of Charleroi have found and identified the remains of An Marchal, aged 19, and Esje Lambrecks, aged 17, public prosecutor Michel Bourlet said yesterday. *writes Stephen Bates in Jumet.*

The discovery of the bodies, buried about 18ft deep beneath a dilapidated workshop, came after more than a week of digging at the property owned by Marc Dutroux, the 39-year-old unemployed

Hurricane heads for the Bahamas
HURRICANE Fran bore down on the Bahamas yesterday as forecasters urged the residents of Florida to prepare for its arrival later this week.

The hurricane was moving towards the Bahamas at about 15mph with top winds of nearly 80mph.

The Bahamian meteorology department posted a hurricane watch and a tropical storm warning for Acklins Island, Long Island, San Salvador, Great Exuma and Cat Island in the central Bahamas.

In Florida, forecasters at the National Hurricane Centre in Miami urged residents to start storm preparations. James-Lewis Free, a scientist at the centre, said Fran would strike the northern part of the state tomorrow.

But there were no preparations for the hurricane in the Bahamas yesterday evening. "No one really gets moving until we issue the warning," Jay Butler, a meteorologist, said. "It's not as big a deal here." — AP.

Suu Kyi aide gets 14 years
BURMESE authorities have doubled the prison sentence of Aung San Suu Kyi's personal assistant to 14 years, the democracy leader said yesterday.

Win Etein, a former Burmese army captain, was arrested in May when the military government detained 262 of Ms Suu Kyi's supporters to derail a congress of her National League for Democracy.

He was sentenced last month to seven years in Insein prison — notorious for torture — for allegedly taking part in a conspiracy to smuggle a videotape out of Burma purporting to show the failure of the summer rice crop in the rural region of Henzada.

Tin Oo, vice-chairman of the league, said the authorities were claiming that Win Etein was connected with 19 party members arrested in northern Burma recently for having links with expatriate Burmese in India.

The regime views the arrests as belonging to an illegal organisation. — AP.

French bombers target Pope
FRENCH authorities said yesterday they had found a homemade bomb in the basilica of a church that Pope John Paul II will visit later this month.

The parish priest discovered the bomb on Monday in a crypt of the St Laurent-sur-Sèvre church in La Roche-sur-Yon in western Brittany.

The device was hidden near the foot of a tomb holding the remains of Louis-Marie Grignon de Montfort, one of two 18th century French clerics the Pope plans to honour.

Beneath what experts described as a "crude pyrotechnical device" was an inscription in Latin and French — "In nomine Papae, pomum" or "In the name of the Pope, boom." — AP.

Spillover

Missiles: a short term fix

But collateral damage to any anti-Saddam alliance

THE CRUISE MISSILES have flown again, with even greater accuracy, it is said, than before. They have certainly had a devastating effect on what remains of the alliance which mustered against Saddam Hussein in the Gulf War. President Clinton has described the operation as in defence of US national interest and as justified punishment for Iraq's "reckless acts". John Major has supported the US, but in more cautious terms. The deafening silence within the region has continued, with Saudi Arabia remaining the most conspicuous case. There are few other backers for the American action around the world — it is opposed by three out of five of the Security Council permanent members. Saddam Hussein claims to be undeterred and promises he will teach the aggressors a lesson — but his officials say that the Iraqi withdrawal from the north is almost complete. Bob Dole is obliged to approve the presidential decision but calls for more "decisive action". Everyone, in short, is behaving in precisely the manner to be expected in this set-piece confrontation which — unless Iraq is excessively foolish — should now begin to wind down. The real winners are Presidents Clinton and Saddam both of whom have played resolute roles in front of their domestic audiences. The real losers, as before, are ordinary Iraqis — in this case Kurdish Iraqis who have suffered from the factional struggles of their own leaders, the equivocal support of the West and the careless brutality of Saddam's forces.

The White House claims that the operation was necessary and justified to ensure that Saddam would lose more than he gained. It is hard to see just how the balance sheet is struck. Extending the no-fly zone will not diminish Saddam's despotism over his own people. The only significant consequence would be if he were foolish

enough to disregard the aerial ban, inviting heavier US retaliation: he has been careful throughout this crisis not to do so. Commentators may argue that now is the time to settle with Saddam for keeps. The plain fact is, as this crisis shows, that no one wants to do so. John Major and his colleagues have put a different gloss on the US action which they say has deterred another humanitarian disaster in northern Iraq. This is a more acceptable explanation for British public opinion, but what has actually happened to the Kurds — with Baghdad supporting one faction against another — is very different from the disaster which threatened in 1991.

What the crisis really proclaims is the final end of long-faded illusions about the consequences of the Gulf War. The alliance on which it was based, both within the region and internationally, has been shredded away. Saddam's grip on power has hardly weakened: as successive coup attempts have failed it may even have improved. The boost which the war gave to the authority of the UN was ephemeral and false. Mr Clinton in his statement did not cite any UN resolution to justify his action. The British lean heavily on Resolution 688 — which does not confer any powers on member states to act.

The cruise missiles were a predictable response, forecast from the first hours of the crisis — no doubt by Saddam as well as everyone else. He would have regarded a failure to launch them as a sign of weakness. The irony is that the act of launching them reveals a deeper weakness in the ability of the international community to do anything positive for the long term. A constructive approach would require developing a new relationship with Iraq, and promoting overdue democratic reform almost everywhere in the region. Missiles or no missiles, that is the only way forward.

Commonsense in the classroom

The direction of five-year-old assessments is on the right lines

FIRST day back at school yesterday and there was an immediate row in the playground: who said what first. But better that Conservative and Labour front benchers were arguing over who called for "baseline assessments" of five-year-olds first, rather than disputing the need for such assessments. In truth, all three main political parties were particularly slow in grasping the importance of early assessments. If you want to measure the genuine achievement of schools, then you need to know the level of children's attainment on entering school not just when they leave. So just as the results of secondary schools can only fairly be judged by measuring the "value added" from entry at 11, so primary school performance needs to be measured against the level of attainment of their intakes at five. All political parties are now agreed on this, but they weren't when we commissioned three academics in 1992 to demonstrate that "value added" league tables were viable.

Sensibly, Gillian Shephard has learned from her predecessors' mistakes. She is not imposing a single national assessment scheme at five. She has followed the advice of Sir Ron Dearing, the School Curriculum and Assessment Authority peacemaker, who had to rescue Mrs Shephard's predecessors from a classroom war over a curriculum which needed to be slimmed down and tests at 7, 11 and 14 which were too complicated. About half of all primary schools already have an

assessment procedure at five. They find it crucial in establishing an early understanding of each child's knowledge, skills and aptitudes. Remember, even at this age there is a wide variation in ability. Schools will be able to seek accreditation of their own schemes under the proposed national framework which will set out key principles that assessment procedures have to meet. Meanwhile, during the consultation period on the Government's proposals, trials will be conducted on three assessment procedures drawn up by Sir Ron. All three will involve short tests and tasks — taken after a child has settled in, but before the first half-term — designed to assess literacy, numeracy, creativity and social development.

The emphasis is on schemes being "unobtrusive" for children and "manageable" for teachers. Extensive consultation is promised before the evolution of a national framework which would provide an overall picture of children's attainments and a firm foundation for later value added analysis. This is over cautious but sensible given the failure of earlier gun-gang tactics. There are some obvious doubts: will teachers under score at entry to achieve a bigger "value added" at the end? But the direction and momentum is right. Now will all schools fill the gaps in school prospectuses, documented by the Consumers' Association yesterday? More importantly, will ministers provide the resources for better nursery provision and smaller infant classes?

BSE and the EU: a conspiracy

But it is a conspiracy against the consumer, not Britain

THE 1996 BSE crisis, plus a little help from the right-wing press, has managed to convince many people in this country that European agriculture policy is a conspiracy against poor little Britain. How very convenient; and how very wrong.

A truer insight into European Union motives over beef has emerged in the documents leaked this week from the commission's agriculture directorate to the Paris newspaper Libération. In these 1992 documents, the aptly named Guy Legras, head of the directorate, advocates putting the lid on public discussion of the mad-cow scandal. Talking about BSE inevitably causes problems for the beef market, warns M Legras. Governments must tread warily, he says, and scientists must avoid debate. "In order to maintain public confidence it is essential not to provoke a reopening of the debate."

Thus speaks the authentic voice of

the bureaucrat and instinctive protector of vested interests. M Legras sees BSE not as a health hazard but as a threat to a producer-dominated market which is heavily in surplus. What worries him is not the effect on our food but the effect on his beef industry. The instincts, priorities and language of M Legras are indistinguishable from those of our own agriculture ministry.

It is true that European agriculture is in part a conspiracy. But the conspiracy is against European consumers not against the British nation. In their hatred of all things European, our Conservatives can't — or won't — see this. As a result, they miss the point of the beef crisis, which is that artificial markets and artificial farming have combined to produce very large profits for farmers while leaving citizens to pick up the financial and health costs. If Europe is now putting the consumer first, then about time too.



Letters to the Editor

The day the bombs fell on Iraq

WHATEVER justification there may be for military action against the Saddam Hussein regime, no one should be under any illusion that it stems from a concern for the Kurdish people.

Prior to the Gulf war, neither the United States nor Britain showed the remotest concern for the plight of the Kurds or the Marsh Arabs. After the Gulf war, the West used the plight of the Kurds in a cynical move to embarrass Saddam Hussein by exercising control over Iraqi territory with the establishment of the so-called "safe havens". Yet Saddam has committed no crime which has not been exceeded in south-eastern Turkey (north-west Kurdistan) by successive Turkish regimes. Because of its perceived strategic importance to the West, Britain, America and Germany have not only acquiesced in the war of genocide against the Kurds, they

have provided Turkey with the weapons to carry it out. John Austin-Walker MP, House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA.

BOTH Defence Secretary Michael Portillo and US government spokespeople quoted on CNN television have justified the American attack on Iraq with reference to UN Security Council Resolution 688, dated April 5, 1991. Inter alia, this resolution "condemns the repression of the Iraqi civilian population in many parts of Iraq, including most recently in Kurdish populated areas", and demands that Iraq "immediately end this repression". It goes on to empower the Secretary General of the United Nations to "use all the resources at his disposal, including those of the relevant UN agencies, to address urgently the critical needs of the refugees and displaced Iraqi population." Nowhere does it

provide for unilateral military action by any UN Security Council member to enforce this.

President Clinton's decision to punish Saddam with the cruise missile retribution, whilst no doubt a helpful boost to his re-election campaign, undermines the collective authority of the United Nations. (Dr) David Lowry, 45 Clendon Close, Stoneleigh, Surrey KT17 2NH.

YOUR report (Running from Saddam, August 31) which referred to the plight of six Iraqi women was largely based on the hearsay evidence of their legal representative and drew questionable conclusions. It stated, for instance, that more than a million Iraqis have fled the country in recent years — by implication from Saddam Hussein's "brutal regime". Another explanation is that

they have been forced to leave because of the dire straits to which the Iraqi economy has been reduced in the wake of the Gulf war and the consequent sanctions. Douglas V Williams, 22 Derwent Crescent, Acton, Wrexham.

IT IS certainly proper for Britain to give all assistance to Iraqi refugees, for the reasons stated by Emma Nicholson (Unite against Baghdad, August 28). There is no comparison between the current situation in Iraq and that which pertained in South Africa. Sanctions were supported by the black population of South Africa. Sanctions are not supported by the Iraqi people, who continue to suffer starvation and death because of the lack of food and medical supplies. Sheila Abdullah, 6 Bedford Road, Oughtibridge, Sheffield S30 3FB.

On social democracy

THE new Clause IV of Labour's constitution, which Tony Blair persuaded the party to back last year, begins: "The Labour Party is a democratic socialist party." Now Labour's leader tells David Frost on TV (Blair urges clean fight, September 2) that he regards himself as both a modern social democrat and a democratic socialist. No wonder John Prescott has to remind us that Labour's philosophy and purpose is something different to that of the failed SDP. That party's stance seemed indistinguishable from that of the Liberals with which it eventually merged.

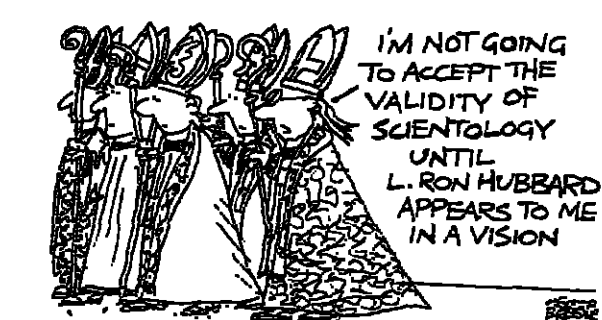
Does the new Clause IV represent the real purpose of New Labour, or will Tony Blair be driven to re-write the constitution again and delete any reference to socialism? Ron Huzzard, 37 Hollingworth Road, Pitswood, Orpington, Kent BR5 1AQ.

Clash over cult

IN the early 1980s I investigated modern cults for a minor science-fiction magazine. The Church of Scientology (Church that Ron built, August 29) allowed me to research with reasonable freedom.

I found many of the theories of L Ron Hubbard to be convincing. I found his followers to be friendly, intelligent and honest. Their attempts to recruit me were persistent but not invasive. However, I found myself asking why, if Dianetics was so good, were its theories not more widely and more cheaply, if not freely, available? Why the secrecy, hierarchy and rigmarole attached to the Church of Scientology? And why, most importantly, the personality cult around its founder? I was forced to the conclusion, mainly based on the fantastic and improbable autobiographical detail made available by L Ron Hubbard, that the founder of Scientology himself was a mountebank, however sincere his followers, and that the organisation was largely a way of personal aggrandisement. Paul Thompson, 5 Isabella Place, Scone PH2 7E.

I HAVE been in Scientology for 20 months and admit that I had concerns at first due to my lack of awareness. I have a history of mental problems and depression and have visited a number of psychologists with little improvement. Over the last 20 months, just



by finding out a bit more about myself using Scientology technology, I have never been happier. I have bought services for several thousands of pounds, but what price is there on happiness? Without Scientology I would be either dead now or on significant mental medication. Renewed confidence and increased happiness through Scientology technology has been the experience of thousands of people in Britain and millions around the world.

Scientists are from all walks of life. I myself am a civil servant, and seek only self-improvement through self-awareness. I don't think that is particularly sinister. James Fraser, Rosebery Street, Swindon, Wiltshire SN1.

LOOK forward to further exposes emphasising the "loquacious" of some of our more established religions. An obvious starting point would be the Anglican and Catholic churches, with their "bizarre" belief systems (everlasting life, eternal damnation, obsessions and unquestioning obedience, to some ill-defined entity). Their

intimate association with the Establishment certainly produces an "obsession with power, money and manipulation" and the "uniforms" worn by bishops and archbishops would not look out of place in pantomime.

To those of us lacking the insights of religious conviction, Scientology appears positively sane by comparison. Mike Pokorny, 1 Nunery Stables, St Albans, Herts AL1 2AS.

YOUR review of L Ron Hubbard did not include the fact that, having garnered the ideas of Gurdjieff and Ouspensky, he visited the source in India. Gurdjieff had at least one famous film star of the thirties tending pigs in France. L Ron Hubbard clearly saw the potential of self-examination and the commercial potential of a highly organised marketing operation.

Self-examination should be exactly that. Carried out within a framework of imposed beliefs it becomes a contradiction. E A Smith, 22c Brondebury Villas, London NW6 6AA.

Hospital drama

IN response to Noëlle Kelly, the matron at the British Home and Hospital for Incurables (Letters, September 3), we used hidden cameras to film Ian Parker because, had we filmed him openly, it could well have altered the pattern of his day. And the only photo of Ian at a function outside the home that we know of was taken at a function his mother herself took him to.

We gave Mrs Kelly ample opportunity to play a part in the programme. She did not respond to our initial letter and five phone calls; when we did get through she told us her response was in a letter and hung up. That letter, received the day of the recording, was merely a refusal to appear. Neither Ian's mother nor the programme criticised what is done at the hospital for Ian. Rather she talked of "a sin of omission". Should Ian Parker be elsewhere? That's why we made the programme: because people like Ian need an advocate. Charles Bunce, Series producer, The Rantzen Report, BBC TV, 201 Wood Lane, London W12 7TS.

NOELLE Kelly stated in Saturday's Guardian: "He [my son Ian] cannot communicate at all." On Tuesday, she is on your letters page stating that he can and does communicate his needs. Who is publishing inaccuracies? Janet Parker, 105 Kings Court, Hamlet Gardens, London W6.

SOCIAL democracy and democratic socialism were interchangeable terms a century before the Gang of Four hijacked one of them. Marx's own socialist party espoused social democracy and was called the SPD. Engels called himself a social democrat. Britain's own Social Democratic Federation, with a programme of democratic socialism, was founded in 1884. Labour, a latercomer to the scene, was always worn both the social democracy and the democratic socialist labels. In this, if in nothing else, Tony Blair is a dyed-in-the-wool traditionalist. David Boulton, Hobsons Farm, Dent, Cumbria LA10 5RF.

TONY Blair should be reminded that on the last occasion that the Social Democrats contested a parliamentary election (May 24, 1990), they gained fewer votes than the Monster Raving Loonies. N E Antill, Woodbine, Whitney, Hereford HR3 6HZ.

PERHAPS it would be better, and clearer, if Mr Blair simply dropped any reference to socialism or social and simply called himself a democrat. If he must have a prefix, Christian would seem to be a lot more in keeping with his politics. Tom M Wheeler, 346 Holloway Road, London N7.

Please include a full postal address, even an e-mailed letters, and a telephone number. We may edit letters; shorter ones are more likely to appear.

A test for commonsense

ROS Coward (Why the Tories have won over education, September 2) was perceptive to highlight the growing problem of stress caused by school tests. Our own survey complements the ChildLine finding she refers to, namely that 66 per cent of parents now think pupils are under too much pressure to pass their exams.

I have since calculated that — this summer alone — all secondary-school pupils in England and Wales spent a total of 71 million hours straining in exam halls, the equivalent of 12,363 years. Peter Smith, General Secretary, Association of Teachers and Lecturers, 7 Northumberland Street, London WC2N 5DA.

ROS COWARD is wrong to imply that "hard" evidence about mass failure and underachievement implicating the local comprehensive is now available. There is a

growing recognition that our system does not do well by the less able.

This difference is emerging long before secondary school so it does not justify a return to selection — quite the reverse. Margaret Tulloch, Executive Secretary, Campaign for State Education, 158 Durham Road, London SW20 0DG.

NOW that comprehensive standards across the board and loosening the rigid class system, they are deemed too costly to maintain. The Government wishes to re-impose order with a return to uniforms and nostalgic syllabi. While education remains central to social change, Ms Coward does the modern social order no favours in trying to turn the clock back. Alan Mills, 113 Alburgh Road, Milton Keynes MK13 0DW.

Just say no

THE decision of the Chief Constable of Grampian to introduce "voluntary" drug testing in his force raises several issues. Apart from the dubious legality, the idea of asking police officers to submit to such a request is offensive and simply bizarre. As a police officer with 30 years' service, I would consider such a request to be an appalling slur on my professional integrity. (Insp) Frank Greaney, St Anne Street, Police Station, Liverpool L3 5JJ.

GRAMPIAN'S Chief Constable is to be congratulated. None of his officers should fear anything from random drug testing. Before his officers' screams go out, they should think long and hard about the argument used in favour of mandatory ID cards (which I happen to favour) — it is only the guilty that have anything to fear or hide. Peter Bradshaw, 113 Alburgh Road, Liverpool L17 4JU.

A Country Diary

BURNHAM NORTON, NORFOLK: The coast path between Burnham Deepdale and Burnham Norton is one of the great north Norfolk walks. To the north is saltmarsh, stretching all the way to Scott Head Island. To the south, banked and drained grazing marshes a mile across. On a warm afternoon in late August, it was a transcendental scene. Purple drifts of sea lavender shimmered in the heat haze, edged with the silver-greys and pastel greens of sea-purslane and wormwood. Away on the inland edge of the grazing marshes, swarms of swallows and martins were massing. In the spring the birds of these two habitats would have been quite distinct, but today they passed effortlessly from one to the other. Greenshank flew from brackish pools to sandy creeks. Three marsh harriers sailed lazily from one side of the sea-wall to the other, pursued agitatedly by a score of black-tailed godwits. Yet the

sea-wall here is symbolic and massively physical barrier. It divides not just salt-water and fresh, but rough and smooth, wild and managed, the rhythms of the tide from the slower cycles of human farming. But how long these varieties of wetness can be kept separate is another matter. With the sea-level rising inexorably, the day is not so far off when it may prove too expensive to be forever shoring up the sea-wall, and the flood defences will have to retreat inland. If so, it will mean the end of the grazing marsh as a habitat.

But as one habitat disappears, another could return. Along the landward edge of a saltmarsh allowed to find its natural limit, estuarine forest (almost extinct across Europe now) could begin to form, a boggy tangle of oak, willow and alder whose spring flowers would lie magically under water during the equinoctial high tides. RICHARD MABEY

مكازم الجاهل

Diary
Matthew Norman

Excitement builds in the world of women's magazines. The October Prima — the 10th anniversary issue — comes out next week. ... and the guest editor is Cherie Blair. Regular editor Lindsay Nicholson says that Mrs Blair put the edition together in the fortnight visiting to the office spread over six months. "She showed amazing flair," says Lindsay. "One of her ideas is 'Dinner in half an hour' ... you know, getting home after a day in court and having to cook something very quickly. She says Tony likes his dinner ready when he gets home." Very Stanley Ogeden ... that Coronation Street visit must have gone to his head. "And she's very knowledgeable on the knitting front so she took a close interest in patterns," says Lindsay. "She was absolutely lovely, ever so open and chatty. And she has the most beautiful eyes, with these gorgeous long eyelashes. ... Now she's a good time to mention that Lindsay is a close friend of Alastair Campbell, Mr Tony Blair's press officer, whose missus, Fiona Millar, was herself Cherie's top biographer until mysteriously leaving the post last year.

TONY Blair will be at Cherie's Prima party in Battersea Park on September 12 ("I think she feels that she's always supporting him," says Lindsay, "so he can trail along after her for a change."), but will Mandy Mandelson be there too? It seems so. "I love him," says Lindsay. "When my daughter Hope was tiny, I was on holiday in Majorca and he was just heavenly. ... He spent the whole time collapsing the buggy and rocking the baby. And he was completely unfazed by total breast-feeding." Indeed? "We do publish Prima Baby," adds Lindsay, "so maybe we should ask him to be guest editor of that?"

FROM Cherie Blair to Norma Major, and the news that she wishes to play a more aggressive campaigning role in the next election, becoming a kind of First Lady. This is very odd, for one who has so determinedly avoided centre stage for so long. No doubt the timing of this headline-grabbing announcement is unconnected with the publication of her book about Chequers later this month.

THE Philip Morris charm offensive on New Labour retains its Formula One theme as it cobble the seas. The tobacco giant, which invited Labour MPs to the British Grand Prix (only Geoffrey Robinson accepted), treated front-bencher Peter Hain and his Dad to a tour around the Ferrari factory near Modena. "We were in Italy, retracing my father's wartime exploits," says Mr Hain, who once voted to ban tobacco advertising, "and since we're motor-racing fanatics, we were going to go anyway. But before we left, Philip Morris found out on the grapevine — they have lobbyists working for them, you know." (they never!) "and arranged for us to be shown round the factory." How adorably sweet. It's like Jim'll Fix It all over again (mine's a fortnight at the Cipriani in Venice).

POLICE in Warwickshire have seconded the Book of Revelations in the fight to persuade the CPS to prosecute juveniles. "This is the only person for whom I have felt the need," wrote a certain PC Newman of "Newton's worst young thug," "to write on the antecedent, form, under marks/scar/abnormalities." "Has 666 on rear of head." PC Newman's biblical allusion did the trick, and the boy — whose right to anonymity survives, for the moment at least, the leadership ambitions of my sniffling friend Michael Howard — was taken to court.

FEARS grow that London Underground platform announcements are finding their work a little dull. "Would customers please leave the station by the exit at the rear of the train," said the man at Oxford Circus's Victoria Line yesterday. "The rear of the train," he went on, "is located at the opposite end to the front of the train."

Policy that's neither fish nor fowl

Commentary
Catherine Bennett

AFTER the comparisons with Stalin, with Kim Il Sung, and Mephistopheles, it is reassuring to hear that Tony Blair is nothing at all like Jeffrey Dahmer. How can we be sure? Because the Political Animal Lobby (linked to the International Fund for Animal Welfare) has just made a donation of £1 million to the Labour Party.

Last year the IFAW was responsible for a press advertisement in support of the Wild Mammals (Protection) Bill, headed "What kind of person mutilates small animals?" The question was promptly answered: "Before graduating to mass-murder and necrophilia, Jeffrey Dahmer mutilated birds, rodents and domestic animals." The implication, to many of those who complained to the Advertising Standards Authority, was that anyone engaged in the activities to be outlawed if the Bill succeeded (fox-hunters, for example) was a potential mass-murderer. The ASA

subsequently ruled that the reference to Dahmer was "shocking and had caused offence". It is not the only time IFAW's promotional techniques have been censured. The ASA has also deplored an advertisement featuring John Wayne Bobbitt's severed penis. Others have objected to the grisly contents of the IFAW's mail shots.

Still, it is thanks to such brutish fund-raising that the Labour Party has now received its biggest single donation from an outside body. If the party has not, as yet, been attacked for accepting funds associated with lurid and occasionally offensive shock tactics, it is probably because both the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats have profited from the same source.

The extraordinarily flush IFAW is run from America by a man called Brian Davies, who instigated the ban on baby-seal hunting in Canada. In 1990 he set up the Political Animal Lobby to direct funds into British politics, and before the last election £300,000 was showered on the main parties in an attempt to raise the political profile of animal welfare. The reward was immediate: photo-opportunities with John Major and Chris Patten, and meetings with Neil Kinnock and Paddy Ashdown.

Since then, the Wild Mammals (Protection) Bill has failed to stop fox-hunting, and the Political Animal Lobby now considers that Labour "offers the best across-the-board deal for animals". Its confidence is apparently inspired by Labour's promise of a free vote on outlawing hunting with hounds. Although a majority of the population is opposed to the sport, the cause has always been particularly dear to Labour supporters, for obvious reasons. Fox-hunters are nearly all wealthy and posh, usually rightwing, and as Tony Benn has observed, "dress up in red coats". Indeed, New Labour's continued opposition to fox-hunting may turn out to be its most enduring link with Old Labour. Fox-lovers have been assured of Blair's personal distaste for fox-hunting, deer-coursing and hare-coursing with dogs.

"Tony Blair's position is that he is opposed to these forms of hunting and he would vote for their abolition."

But does this commitment amount to "the best across-the-board deal for animals"? Leaving aside the question of whether foxes, as vermin, prefer to be shot, gassed or hunted to death, Labour's pledges to non-human life seem to be hardly more advanced than those of any other party. Fish, for example, have much to fear from the party's Charter for Anglers, aimed at reassuring Britain's 3,000,000 fishermen. Fish may

suffer pain, but they do so at the hands of decent, working men in green anoraks, who show every sign of being potential Labour voters. So fish will not be getting a firm pledge. Nor are there promises to protect game-birds from being shot out of hand, or to improve the miserable lot of farm animals being slaughtered behind closed doors. If Labour intends to win the votes of floating animal lovers, it offers little to the sporting matrons of Frithlinges and Shoreham.

Even on hunting, Labour's vote-winning determination is threatened by the great and good Leave Country Sports Alone group, supported by Melvyn Bragg, Penny and John Mortimer and Jeremy Isaacs. Its chair, the peeress Anne Mallalieu, has said that if a bill banning hunting passed the Commons, the Lords could "kick the matter into touch", by referring it to a select committee.

So why do so many animal-lovers persist in believing that the politics of the left have most to offer their cause? It is, perhaps, the hope that still sustains so many Labour voters: that the party is the champion of the dispossessed, the oppressed and disenfranchised. If animals are another oppressed class, Labour will naturally want to do its best for them.

Since the seventies, when Richard Ryder coined the expression "speciesism", echo-

ing the terms racism and sexism, animal-rights activists have identified animals as the next oppressed group in line for equality. To the American philosopher, Bernard Rollin, demands for animal liberation follow on from agitation for women, blacks, homosexuals, native populations, the aged, the Third World, the insane, the handicapped, children, and so on. No matter that animals, unlike humans, have no concept of right or justice, and no ability to further their own cause. In the Great Ape Project, a book calling for senior primates to be admitted as equals, another philosopher, Thomas Regan (really) sees no reason to stop there. Our insensitivity to those notoriously forgetful creatures, fish and reptiles, is a "mere symptom of how deeply ingrained our speciesism is".

More recently, American feminists have gone further, arguing (in a book called *Animals and Women: Feminist Theoretical Explorations*) that speciesism and sexism are "interlocking oppressions", and therefore "no one creature will be free until all are free". It may be some time before animals are able to do their bit for feminists: meanwhile the American academics have got the alliance off to an impressive start in essays such as *Speciesism, Pornography and Hunting, Woman-battering and Harm to Animals, and Thinking Like A Chicken: Farm Animals And The Feminine Connection*.

Compared with this, a vote on fox-hunting is a feeble concession to cause. While foxes and stags be the only animals to be awarded rights? Will huntsmen be the only humans to have their taken away? Or is the ban purely a traditional exercise in class loathing? Either Brian Davies knows something the rest of us do not, or he has just wasted £1 million.

Trouble and strife in the premiership



David McKie

IN A BREAK with previous practice, Norma Major, who used to be considered too shy, is accompanying her husband John on a two-week tour of the country marking the start of the Tories' autumn offensive.

There are two clear advantages here. Compared to most of those who appear on Conservative platforms, Norma looks fresh and clean. If she had an antonym, she would be a woman suffused with a deep ideological passion for privatising utilities. But on top of that, it sets the stage for a contest which isn't just John v Tony but John v Norma v Tony v Cherie. That fits with the Tory purpose of demonising Cherie (or "Rodhamising" her, perhaps, in honour of Mrs Clinton). Not that there's anything new in that. They tried it with Glens Kinnock. A man on the Sun told me after the last election that having tried to put the firelighters on Labour with a concocted picture of Neil Kinnock outside number 10, they changed it in later editions to make it even more frightening by including Glens as well.

His-and-hers campaigning: a trend, I fear, especially after San Diego and Chicago, that cannot be stopped. Maybe it won't be Norma who, at some Conservative conference soon, moves through the audience in the manner of a chanteuse, extolling My Man; but it may be Carolyn Porfollio or Gail Redwood.

Just as well, you may think, that this didn't happen earlier. Apart from besotted Thatcherites, most people would probably choose as the best two administrations of our ebbing century the Campbell-Bannerman government of 1905-08 and the Atlee government of 1945-51. Neither C-B nor Atlee would have necessarily strengthened his claim to the leadership by asking the selectors to take account of his wife. Charlotte Campbell-Bannerman would not have made good television. She was very plain, weighed 18 stone (more by the end of her life) and was socially timid. It didn't help that one of the couple's great pleasures in life was publicly sharing enormous dinners.

Henry adored her, writing her soppy letters which began "my own darling Diddy" and ended "your loving true Poo Ole" or "your old homespun bin D." But he also proudly proclaimed that she influenced his decisions, referring to her as the Authority and something like that.

the Final Court of Appeal. Just imagine the fun the tabloids would have had with something like that.

The problem with Violet Atlee was that having grown up in a Conservative household she remained, in the view of close friends, a Conservative to the end. She didn't believe in dissembling. When in 1937 it was decreed that the Leader of the Opposition should have an annual salary, she told the press this was good news, since it meant she would now have enough mounds to run her home properly. Towards the end of her life she developed a disturbing habit of having well-publicised traffic accidents, but Atlee had ceased to be premier then.

Other premiers too would have had their problems. Asquith's first wife, Helen, showed little taste for political life and no interest in his ambitions; his second, the waspish Margot, was wildly extravagant and a scorching tongue and gloried in being shocking — leaving, as it was said, a wake of weeping injured people behind her. Lucy Baldwin, who first caught Stanley's eye while making a dash for 50 in a ladies' cricket match, was a cherished partner but no natural campaigner. Ramsay MacDonald's wife hated society and had few social graces. Bought an expensive blouse for some Downing Street occasion, she put it on back to front. "It was difficult," said a friend, "to persuade her to dress even respectably." Macmillan's wife, Lady Dorothy, carried on a famous affair with Bob Boothby. That didn't make the prints at the time but certainly would now do.

SOME premierships — Baldwin's certainly — may have gained more from a solid partnership based on the home than from trying to ride a political tandem (though Baldwin used to ring up friends to accompany him on walks, to provide him with the stimulating conversation he didn't get from his wife).

But perhaps the most strikingly supportive of recent political spouses was Denis Thatcher. His was the role of consort. On Margaret's meet-the-people tours, he would walk a few paces behind her, hands clasped behind his back in the manner perfected by the Duke of Edinburgh. Then he would swoop on some hand left unshaken by Margaret. "Good morning," he would say. "M'name's Thatcher." At election press conferences Denis would stand at the back and heckle the questioners. "Who does this fellow think he is?" he would ask in a kind of stentorian mutter. "Is he a commie or something?" (It was often someone no more subversive than the man from the Times.) You wouldn't catch Norma Major blurring out something like that.

Democratic socialists have left the chattering in the Labour Party to the social democrats, argues Roy Hattersley. Now is the time for them to raise their voices

The silent socialists

THERE IS nothing wrong in being a social democrat. Thousands of them have been members of the Labour coalition ever since it was formed in Victorian England. The Labour Representation Committee was packed with unrepentant Liberals who only wanted working men to have a louder voice in parliament. Its draft constitution was explicitly amended to omit all references to socialism. At the inaugural conference of the ILP (where the Labour Party really began) George Bernard Shaw lectured Keir Hardie on the importance of picking the apples before attempting to bake the pies — a classical social democratic metaphor for Fabian gradualism. But although individual members took up positions which, in continental politics, would have been clearly identified with ideological descriptions, Labour asked Juliet's question, "What's in a name?" And — notwithstanding the trouble that her answer caused to family and friends — came to more or less the same conclusion. Labour's rose would smell just as sweet, whether it was a socialist or social democratic bloom.

For most of its history Labour has regarded serious ideological labels as a tedious irrelevance. Party members have found it convenient to exhort each other with allegations about "left-wing extremism" and "right-wing betrayal". But they were always careful not to spoil the fun by producing a definition of the beliefs which they abused. All that was necessary to become a "left winger" was the announcement of that conviction. Then it was possible to support reaction at home and totalitarianism abroad and still be regarded as progressive.

Since the turn of the century Labour has been a coalition not of ideas but of objectives. Back in 1945, there was no doubt or disagreement — from Marxist, democratic socialist or social democrat — about the need for a national health service free at the point of use. Enthusiasm for public ownership of the utilities was equally unanimous. Ian Mikardo (moving the conference resolution which committed the party to nationalisation of gas, water, railways and coal) spoke of a new industrial order which altered forever the balance of economic power. But it was Herbert Morrison — the scourge of the left — who took credit for the idea of monopolistic state corporations.



During the election campaign, Clement Attlee justified their creation in the plain man's language of common sense. We had needed planning and government control to win the war. Obviously — as a matter of logic, not dogma — the same techniques were necessary to win the peace.

Despite the general agreement on policy, the philosophy of the heterogeneous allies remained fundamentally different. Although the differences were obscured, the coalition of objectives hung so easily together. The ameliorators wanted free and universal medical care because they were outraged by the neglect

and the democratic socialists. Unfortunately — because of Labour's disdain for ideological speculation — the Marxists made most of the intellectual running. Wrong though they were to believe that society could be changed by an alteration in the pattern of ownership, and despite the paradox of believing that the victory of the proletariat was both inevitable and in need of a revolutionary struggle, they allowed their way to the front of the argument about what socialism was about. Since the war, only Tony Crosland's Future of Socialism has adequately set out the democratic case for a more equal

society. The week before he died Tony complained to me that democratic socialists "though" ideologues too, are treated as if they believe the Conservatives' had ideas can be combated with no ideas at all". Inside the Labour Party real democratic socialism has slept for too long.

Now the ideological definitions have become crucially important — not because of changes in the Labour Party but because of changes in the society. The rise of the middle classes combined with the social reforms of the last 50 years has put the coalition of objectives under a new strain. It was easy enough to agree that the welfare state should be created. It is more difficult to find common ground about how it should be financed and how it should relate to employment patterns which have changed from the hope of permanent security to the need for constant re-training and the necessity of constantly changing jobs. The distinction between those who want to make life a little better and those who want to make it fundamentally different is suddenly beginning to show.

The argument has been immensely complicated by the silly assumption that only social democrats win elections. Sooner or later — if the Labour Party is to be true to itself — it will have to finance the improved lives of the poor from greater contributions by the rich. These days, poverty is not sufficiently visible to make its alleviation an obvious moral necessity. And there are bogus arguments which pretend that the poor benefit when the rich get richer.

We need an idea — intellectually coherent and ideologically consistent — by which the nation's imagination and compassion can be captured. That idea is democratic socialism, which insists that we all benefit from living in a more equal society. None of that is a complaint against Tony Blair or his announcement that he thinks of himself as a social democrat.

To us
General courses: All levels - 2-4 hours/week.
French
Crash courses: All levels - 4 weeks - 15 hours/week.
isn't
Business French: Advanced only - 15 weeks - 4 hours/week.
second
In company tuition: All levels - General & Business French.
nature,
Tuition for children: At child's school - At home.
it's first.
Call now for a free brochure: 0171 723 7471.
Alliance Française
Alliance Française de Londres
1 Dorset Square, London NW1 6PU.
Sponsored by the French Government
Registered charity no. 276652.

Financial Editor: Alex Brummer
Telephone: 0171-239-9610
Fax: 0171-833-4456

Finance Guardian



Cutting edge... Demonstrators made up as German Chancellor Helmut Kohl (left), Labour Minister Norbert Blum and Finance Minister Theo Waigel make music in Bonn while protesting at planned social security cuts. The event was organised by the German TUC, which has taken the motto 'Show the Red Card to Chancellor Kohl'. PHOTOGRAPH ROBERTO PFEIL

Notebook

Clarke plays his election cards

The Bundesbank, quite legitimately, has been making a number of technical points which may well make life more difficult for UK banks under the new system. Thus, although UK banks would be part of the new European wide payments system Target, the Germans believe it would be wrong for "out" countries to have access to Euro credit lines since this would give them a monetary role in a system of which they are not part.

As worrying, the Bundesbank and others are seeking to slow the process of establishing operational details now, preferring to wait until the countries inside monetary union have been selected (or selected themselves) and then defining the parameters of the system. Their view is that as the "ins" will have to live by the system, they have the right to define its precise terms.

For instance, if the Bundesbank wants to retain a minimum reserves system (of the kind currently operated in Germany) it could do so more easily after decisions to go ahead are taken in 1997, because the clout of the more powerful "outs" like Britain — who oppose this — would be limited.

It is not all clear. Alexandre Lamfalussy, the president of the EMU, accepts this view. His job is to put the mechanism in place before the European Central Bank comes into being. Moreover, he and others may recognise that if the "ins" rig the terms of monetary union sufficiently that instead of being centripetal, drawing in the outsiders, it will become an exclusive club with doubtful legitimacy.

Edited by Alex Brummer

HOWEVER concerned the Bank of England may be about the possibility of the economy overheating, it could come as something of a surprise were the Governor, Eddie George, to persuade Chancellor Kenneth Clarke to reverse the June interest rate cut when the two meet this morning.

From the Conservative view, with a possible eight months to go before an election, the gathering strength of the economy is their main card. All the indicators which concern the Bank, as the guardian of price stability, are essentially better news for the Tories — from surging house prices to improved business surveys.

Indeed, the changing economic picture is causing some City firms to adjust their perspective on the election. A recent economic report from Merrill Lynch argues that the election will be a much closer thing than Labour's current position in the polls suggests. It argues forcefully Labour's lead will be eroded by a "powerful economic upswing" over the coming months.

Fiscal policy already is looser than anticipated at this stage of the economic cycle; monetary policy is running above target and the so-called misery index — a combination of unemployment and inflation — is at 20-year low. In the Merrill view, if the misery index is pushed forward by nine months it starts to become a "warning index" generating the consumer confidence which has been so long in coming forward.

Although the Chancellor sounds extremely prudent in public, he has weakened the monetary stance more than the Bank would like and has also presided over a softer fiscal position than the Treasury would normally approve. He also still has the option of a further tax cut, to put Labour on the backfoot. Mr Clarke may be out of step with his party on Europe, but he is playing a mean game on the economy, which keeps the pressure on Tony Blair and just about keeps Tory hopes from collapsing.

Trustee for suspended investment trusts resigned in May over fears that rules were being broken

Morgan faces £500m compensation bill

Paul Murphy and Richard Miles

MORGAN Grenfell, the German-owned investment bank which was forced to suspend dealings in three of its leading unlisted investment trusts, could face compensation claims stretching to £500 million or more, fund management experts predicted yesterday.

With assets of £1.4 billion owned by 90,000 investors stuck in three funds — the Europa Growth Trust, the Europa Fund and the Europa Capital Growth Fund — the Bank of England is understood to be monitoring the situation closely, concerned that fallout from the affair might weaken the Morgan group as a whole.

Morgan Grenfell is expected to make its first public statement today about the affair and is desperately seeking to limit the damage to its

reputation by relisting the three funds as soon as possible.

A rapid re-assessment of the damage wrought on one of the City's premier institutions was underway after it emerged that General Accident, one of the country's biggest insurance groups, which also acted as a trustee for two of the three suspended funds, resigned in May because it was worried Morgan's fund managers might have broken clear rules set down by Britain's main financial watchdog, the Securities and Investments Board.

It is understood to have been concerned that Morgan might have breached the SIB's threshold for "unapproved" stocks — companies not listed on any recognised investment exchange — which limits holdings to 10 per cent of the fund's total value. The asset management company relied on an exemption to these rules that allows investments in companies

that are soon to be floated on recognised stock exchanges.

General Accident is believed to have taken the matter up with Imro, the fund management industry's watchdog whose officials report directly to the SIB.

Investment managers predicted that if Morgan is shown to have flouted investment rules the bank could face an "avalanche" of compensation claims from investors. Morgan has said it will compensate investors for any losses suffered but has refused to go into further details.

"Rather than a localised, technical problem, this saga could prove to run a lot deeper," one investment adviser said. "There may be allegations that investors were misled. There is bound to be litigation."

Separately, brokers who deal in unit and investment trusts, warned that Morgan is likely to be forced into a stringent write-down of the value

of all its unquoted investments.

"Clearly, there is a real chance that, if and when these funds are relisted and trading resumes, heavy redemptions will force Morgan to sell off assets held in the funds. It will be a forced seller and the unit price of the funds will reflect as much, compounding the losses suffered by existing investors. The bill will be hundreds of millions of pounds," said the head of one big City firm.

Peter Young, the Morgan fund manager who was suspended on Friday, is known to have routed most of his Scandinavian investments through four brokerage houses: Credit Suisse First Boston, Cazanove, Carnegie and Fiba Nordic Securities. A spokesman for Fiba said yesterday that his firm had discussed the issue of valuing unquoted shares with Morgan, but he insisted Fiba was still in the dark as to what Morgan's concerns were.

SFA moves to prevent another Barings fiasco

Pauline Springett

THE Securities and Futures Authority, which regulates the broking industry, yesterday proposed sweeping changes to its rules in an effort to prevent financial failures like last year's collapse of Barings bank.

The proposals, contained in an SFA consultative document, recommend that senior directors must prove that they acted correctly in the event of a firm suffering "a very serious hit, either to its financial position or to its reputation as a regulated entity."

Nicholas Durliacher, chairman of the SFA, said: "We are not proposing that senior executives take responsibility for all the actions of their employees." But he said that he believed the SFA should have the right to "require senior executives formally to justify their conduct and competence."

The new proposals have been drawn up since the former chairman of Barings, Peter Baring, and his deputy Andrew Tuckey, learned that they would not be prosecuted under the SFA rules.

The SFA said that the Barings experience underlined the importance of effective general management. It was clear that the current rules needed strengthening.

"Barings had a matrix management and internal control structure which is typical of internationally active investment firms. The difference with Barings is that the structure ultimately did not work," the SFA said.

The SFA is the organisation responsible for regulating members of all the organised City investment markets involving about 1,350 firms.

ty their conduct and competence."

The new proposals have been drawn up since the former chairman of Barings, Peter Baring, and his deputy Andrew Tuckey, learned that they would not be prosecuted under the SFA rules.

The SFA said that the Barings experience underlined the importance of effective general management. It was clear that the current rules needed strengthening.

"Barings had a matrix management and internal control structure which is typical of internationally active investment firms. The difference with Barings is that the structure ultimately did not work," the SFA said.

The SFA is the organisation responsible for regulating members of all the organised City investment markets involving about 1,350 firms.

Which is the only airline to offer complimentary limousines

at 137 U.S. airports?

at 137 U.S. airports?

De Benedetti quits as Olivetti losses mount

John Glover in Milan

CARLO de Benedetti, the flamboyant Italian entrepreneur, suddenly resigned as chairman of Olivetti, the troubled computer group synonymous with his name for the past 18 years.

The 61-year-old tycoon, known as L'ingegnere (engineer) and a rival in charisma only to Fiat's ex-chairman L'Avvocato (lawyer) Gianni Agnelli, resigned at an emergency board meeting prompted by a collapse in the firm's share-price and continuing losses which have amounted to 3.9 trillion lire (£1.69 billion) in the past five years.

Last night the Olivetti

board disclosed that pre-tax losses in the first half of this year totalled 40.2 billion lire (£191 million). Net operating losses of 90.8 billion lire were, it said, swollen by a 200 billion lire restructuring fund set up to hasten the firm's exit from manufacturing computer hardware.

Fears about continuing losses, executive in-fighting over the troubled group's future strategy and Mr de Benedetti's own lack of credibility had yesterday, at one point, driven the share price down by as much as 7 per cent to a record low before it closed more than 5 per cent down on the day. This followed a 3 per cent fall on Monday.

The share-price turbulence came after the appointment of

a new chief executive in early July, when Mr de Benedetti — an autocrat who had ruled Olivetti in the manner of a Dallas-style Ewing — relinquished his executive powers, although he retained wide control over strategy. He was replaced by Francesco Caio, formerly chief executive of Omnitel, the group's telecoms arm, who swiftly became his arch-rival and was last night confirmed as the firm's chief executive officer. A fellow board member, Antonio Tesoro, becomes titular chairman.

Creditors banks had lost confidence in Mr de Benedetti, the outsider hailed in the late 1980s as the architect of a new-style Italian capitalism which would break the charmed circle dominated by Fiat.

BT remarks were 'misleading'

Nicholas Bannister Technology Editor

DON CRUICKSHANK, OfTel's director general, yesterday criticised British Telecom for giving customers misleading information about competitors.

He ordered the group to tighten controls over staff talking to customers about its rivals after secretly-recorded interviews by the Consumers' Association showed some 60 per cent were unsatisfactory.

Mr Cruickshank said: "There is accelerating competition towards greater competition in the telecommunications industry in the UK. I am dismayed that this has not

been matched by the development of a culture in BT in which competing fairly is instinctive to its staff.

"Research by the CA has revealed a very serious gap between BT's statements of good intent about trading fairly and statements made by customer-facing staff, which are unsubstantiated, misleading or just plain inaccurate."

He complained that BT had taken action only after clear evidence of problems had emerged from another organisation, even though it had established its own compliance department. "BT should really keep its own house in order without the need for my involvement," he said.

A BT spokesman said: "We

are already doing everything the director general says he wants us to do. BT is committed to trading vigorously and fairly, and aims to follow best sales and marketing practices. We never set out to deliberately mislead customers. But we live in the real world and accept that there have been occasional lapses by our people when discussing what can be very complicated issues."

He said Mr Cruickshank had based his order on "a statistically and scientifically invalid exercise covering 26 tape recordings surreptitiously made by the Consumers' Association". The questions were often designed to confuse and untypical of a genuine customer's call.

Escape clause

THE fund manager Imro may not yet be fully engaged in the inquiry about what has gone wrong at Morgan Grenfell's three European funds, but with each passing day there are more questions. It appears that the retirement of General Accident as trustee of two of the European funds, first disclosed in the investment managers reports issued in June 1996 (for the period to May 31, 1996) may not have been as routine as Morgan Grenfell would have people believe. GA had as trustee, expressed reservations over the management of the funds on several occasions, expressing its disagreement before deciding to resign rather than retire. Unfortunately, the 90,000 investors in the trusts were not made aware of this imbroglio and it is not clear that the regulators were told either.

As for the current hole in the funds, the sum now being talked about may be £200 million. At one point, the largest of the funds, the Morgan Grenfell Growth Trust, had as much as 30 per cent invested in unquoted stocks, against the official limit of 10 per cent. Morgan Grenfell seems to have exploited an escape clause which allows the trusts to invest in unquoted shares which are planning to come to the market within 12 months. That may have been fine when technology stocks were booming, but no longer.

Euro club

IT IS almost certainly premature for the Euro-enthusiasts in the City to be talking of the loss of thousands of jobs if Britain is not part of monetary union. Nevertheless, it is clear that the technical discussions in which Mr George is currently involved, at the European Monetary Institute (EMI) are becoming increasingly difficult. France almost certainly views the UK's current "out" status as a competitive opportunity.

Concorde turns on no-smoking light as it joins flight ban trend

CIGAR-CHOMPING tycoons and chain-smoking executives accustomed to dashing across the Atlantic to New York on British Airways' Concorde are in for a nasty shock. From the beginning of next year the supersonic trip is being added to the airline's list of no-smoking flights, writes Nicholas Bannister.

BA has decided that the growing demand for smoke-free flights means it can safely ignore the dwindling band of hardened smokers in most of the areas in which it operates.

BA's chief executive, Bob Ayling, said that from January 1 next year the airline would extend its ban on smoking to cover a further 350 flights a day. The move



"reflected customer demand".

This will increase the number of BA flights with complete bans on smoking to 1,100 a day — or 90 per cent of its seats.

But seats for smokers are to be retained on flights to areas where the habit is still deeply entrenched, such as Japan, Spain and Hong Kong.

TOURIST RATES — BANK SELLS

Australia 1.9125	France 7.68	Italy 2.218	Singapore 2.1475
Austria 15.85	Germany 2.255	Malta 0.5410	S Africa 6.755
Belgium 46.36	Greece 362.75	Netherlands 2.53	Spain 190.15
Canada 2.065	Hong Kong 11.76	New Zealand 2.1975	Sweden 10.21
Cyprus 0.6956	India 55.60	Norway 9.79	Switzerland 1.8225
Denmark 8.75	Ireland 0.9350	Portugal 221.50	Turkey 129.786
Finland 6.98	Israel 4.90	Saudi Arabia 5.82	USA 1.5250

Supplied by NatWest Bank (excluding Indian rupee and Israeli shekel)



Face of rejection... Sacked workers outside Magnet's Darlington factory yesterday

PHOTOGRAPH: RICHARD PAINYER

Unions kept out in the cold

Workforce/Seumas Milne surveys the yawning chasm between left and right on the future of employment law

THE combination of leaked Tory plans for new controls on trade unions with the publication yesterday of the most comprehensive programme of employment rights since the seventies has graphically highlighted the continuing absence of any political consensus in Britain on the role of trade unionism.

In the Government's corner, and in the wake of this summer's outbreak of stoppages in rail, post, London Underground, fire service and benefit offices, Trade and Industry Secretary Ian Lang — after eight doses of anti-union legislation since 1979 — is making ever more menacing noises about his latest wheezes for outlawing strikes in the public sector.

On the other side of the fence, unions are becoming increasingly restive about the web of restrictions that make watertight legal strikes almost impossible, while the lack of legal rights in the workplace is the most glaring in the European Union.

Added to that is the growing realisation that Tony Blair has no intention of making more than marginal changes to the balance of legal power in the workplace.

A barometer of that frustration is yesterday's publication, by the Institute of Employment Rights — a heavyweight union-backed think-tank — of an employment rights manifesto which would sweep away Tory legislation and replace it for the first time in industrial relations history with a coherent, alternative framework.

Drawn up over 18 months by a team of lawyers, academics and trade unionists — and guided by specialists such as Professor Keith Ewing and John Hensley, QC — the programme aims to underpin a restoration of trade union freedoms with best west European practice and minimum international standards as a counter to the insecurity and employer arrogance of today's workplaces.

Strengthened employment protection from day one in a job, new rights for working parents, a statutory training levy on employers, generous collective bargaining rights and the restoration and extension of union freedoms are all central to the manifesto. Significantly, the report is sponsored by all the TUC's largest affiliated unions; it was launched by Rodney Bickerstaffe, the Unison leader, but goes far beyond the TUC's limited and laboriously-constructed employment rights package, which will be routinely voted through at next week's Blackpool congress.

For example, unlike the TUC, the IER argues that pre-strike ballots should not be required in law if workers walk out over victimisations, unilateral changes in working conditions imposed by an employer or over the refusal to cross a picket line.

It is enough to make the Trade and Industry Secretary's blood run cold. And although the TUC originally welcomed the IER's work as a contribution to a wider debate, a spokesman said yesterday there was a risk that its proposals could be unhelpful and "muddy the picture at this stage in the electoral cycle. This is the time to unswervingly support the Government's proposals," he added.

Magnet dubbed a bully for sacking 300 to end strike

UP TO 300 workers were sacked yesterday by Magnet, the furniture retailer, after a 10-day strike over pay and conditions at its factory in Darlington, Co Durham.

A union leader accused the company of using "bullying tactics" to try to force the strikers back to work after months of negotiations broke down.

The strike began on August 22 when 370 people walked out of the kitchen furniture factory and began picketing. On Saturday, the company warned workers they would be sacked if they did not return yesterday.

At issue was a pay and conditions package, agreed three years ago when the company was under different ownership. New negotiations began in March with four recognised unions. The company said last night "a small number of union members" rejected a final offer. This included a 3 per cent rise in basic pay for about 60 per cent of the workers, plus improvements in shift and overtime payments.

BA and Cathay 'interested in superjumbo'

Simon Beavis and Nicholas Bannister

TWO of the airlines most likely to require a new generation of "super-jumbo" aircraft yesterday confirmed their interest in buying planes able to carry more than 600 passengers but made it clear they were not close to placing orders.

British Airways and Cathay Pacific both said they eventually saw a need for very large passenger aircraft as the two leading commercial plane makers continued to slug it out at the Farnborough airshow.

Power boost for the Treasury

THE Government yesterday moved closer to achieving its target of netting £1 billion from the sale of "straggler" holdings in privatised companies when it sold nearly all its remaining shares in National Power, PowerGen and Southern Electric.

The Treasury sold a 2.4 per cent stake in National Power, a 2.5 per cent stake in PowerGen and a small 0.4 per cent holding in Southern, in an exercise estimated to have raised £203 million.

British Airways and Cathay Pacific both said they eventually saw a need for very large passenger aircraft as the two leading commercial plane makers continued to slug it out at the Farnborough airshow.

State spending 'a disgrace'

GOVERNMENT spending was condemned as "disgracefully low" by the head of Blue Circle's cement division yesterday, as the company's key UK cement operations produced a 24 per cent drop in operating profit and a 7 per cent decline in sales volumes in the first half year.

In McKenzie said expected recovery in the second half was not materialising. His disappointment at the lack of a UK recovery was mirrored by Keith Orrell-Jones, the chief executive, who said the full-year outcome in the UK would be better than the first half, and added: "By spring we expect to see some upturn."

Boeing conspicuously failed to announce any launch orders for its planned 500X and 600X stretched and modernised versions of the 747

Iceland feels the chill

THE Iceland frozen food retailer suffered an 11 per cent fall in first-half earnings and warned that profits for the full year would also be down. Chairman and chief executive Malcolm Walker blamed the fall on tighter margins and sluggish sales.

Mr Walker said: "While we expect to report lower profits in 1996, the actions we are taking to improve our stores, products, systems and price positioning are all designed to restore real growth to sales and hence to produce improved returns for shareholders in the longer term." — Tony May

State-owned Swedish buses join Stagecoach bandwagon

STAGECOACH, the aggressively expanding bus and train operator, yesterday became Scandinavia's biggest bus operator when it bought Swebus, the Swedish state railway's bus subsidiary, for \$2.4 billion (£231 million).

The deal includes the \$1.2 billion cost of buying Swebus itself, along with a similar amount representing the group's debts, which the Perth-based company will take on. Stagecoach shares fell 1p to 529.5p on the news.

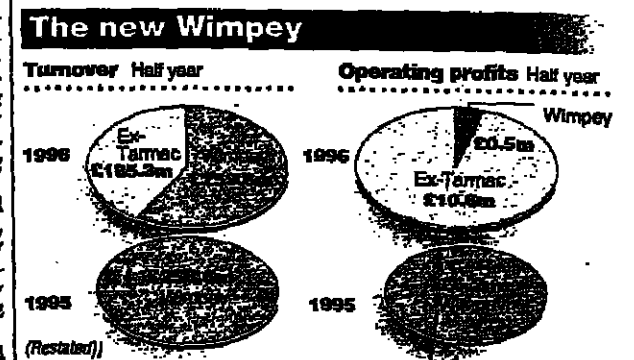
Wimpey loses £8.6m on sluggish new home sales

GEORGE Wimpey, the UK's biggest housebuilder, yesterday confirmed that the much-vaunted housing market recovery does not extend to new homes as it disclosed an \$8.6 million loss in the first half compared with a £1 million profit at the same time last year.

Joe Dwyer, Wimpey's chairman, said: "Recent months have seen extensive media coverage claiming a revival, even a mini-boom in the UK housing market. But a more detailed examination of the UK housing market showed that new housing was sluggish, although sales of existing homes were on the rise."

Mr Dwyer, who turned the group into a pure housebuilder in March when he swapped his group's loss-making minerals division for Farmer's homebuilding unit, McLean Homes, believes the worst is over for the housing market. "There are, for the first time in many years, real signs of sustained improvement in the UK housing market."

Table with financial data: Stock market value, Share price, Dividends, Interest cover, etc.



Government actuary accused of breach of trust

Labour urges rail pensions inquiry

Michelle Hambleton

THE Labour Party yesterday demanded an investigation into how confidential details of the £10.5 billion rail workers' pension fund were given by the Government actuary to bidders for rail franchises.

to pensioners and take action to make sure they do not get ripped off."

Andrew Smith, the shadow transport secretary, said that the disclosure of the fund's surplus — large enough to ensure that successful bidders would have to make small, if any, pension contributions during the seven-year franchise period — represented a gross breach of trust.

Companies which have contributed to pension funds which have run up surpluses have on occasion been allowed to cease contributions until the size of the fund is more in line with that needed to meet its liabilities.

He has written to Sir George Young, the Transport Secretary, pressing for a full investigation into the matter, which was first reported in the Guardian.

There is intense legal debate about the ownership of pension fund surpluses. The courts have ruled in favour of both pensioners and companies, depending on the circumstances.

Mr Smith said the details about the fund were "a lucrative added extra for private companies looking to win rail franchises".

However, more enlightened companies have allowed surpluses to be used to improve a pension scheme's benefits.

Cat and mouse show is 'call my bluff' up north

Outlook/Granada's protracted merger with YTV is nerve-racking stuff — and it's beginning to tell, writes Ian King

WARD Thomas, the stalwart chairman and chief executive of Yorkshire Tyne-Tees Television, has always enjoyed a well-deserved reputation for candour and honesty.

longer off the better" in Mr Thomas's words — there is plenty to get on with, not least improving YTV's disappointing advertising performance.

But even he was pushing things yesterday when he insisted that YTV's shares, bobbing around the 27 mark at the start of the year, should realistically be valued at 17p each, valuing the company at almost \$900 million.

Although the group's half year pre-tax profits showed a substantial improvement, its share of national advertising revenue actually dropped during the same period, meaning advertising income barely improved.

At the same time, if YTV succeeds in renegotiating its lease payments with the Independent Television Commission, another £35 million a year could be saved.

Meanwhile, YTV's main strength, the quality of its output, remains in no doubt and helped the group post programme sales up by almost 5 per cent.

Wimpey loses £8.6m on sluggish new home sales

THE UK's biggest housebuilder, yesterday confirmed that the much-vaunted housing market recovery does not extend to new homes as it disclosed an \$8.6 million loss in the first half compared with a £1 million profit at the same time last year.

the group into a pure housebuilder in March when he swapped his group's loss-making minerals division for Farmer's homebuilding unit, McLean Homes, believes the worst is over for the housing market.

Mr Dwyer, who turned the group into a pure housebuilder in March when he swapped his group's loss-making minerals division for Farmer's homebuilding unit, McLean Homes, believes the worst is over for the housing market.

Mr Roebuck said preliminary government data showed that overall construction fell in the second quarter. He said he expects total construction to fall 1 per cent in 1996.

July 1996

es rail
nquity
e show is
up north

Racing

Turner about-turn in row over safety

Chris Hawkins

DR MICHAEL Turner yesterday withdrew his resignation and pledged to carry on as the Jockey Club's Chief Medical Adviser after the row about safety standards on racecourses.

Turner, so vociferous in his criticism, has had a rapid change of heart after being assured by his employees that safety is a priority and that his contribution is highly valued.

The Jockey Club stewards met yesterday morning with Turner and were happy to retain him, issuing a statement which read: "Detailed discussions have taken place with Dr Turner in which he has reaffirmed both his complete trust in the stewards and confidence in their support for his work. He also recognised the Jockey Club's total commitment to safety."

While one does not doubt over the monitoring of medical arrangements at Southwell is now over. Both the Jockey Club and Dr Turner regard the incident as closed and will continue to work together to improve standards and safety.

To this end Turner will inspect all aspects of the medical and safety facilities at Southwell prior to the re-opening there on Monday. Turner said: "I was used to hear that my serious misgivings about the compliance of Southwell with the Jockey Club instructions have been interpreted by the stewards as a total lack of confidence in their role, an interpretation that is simply baseless."

Such sentiments from Turner are in sharp contrast to the tone of his original remarks and it is not hard to see how comments such as "I either go along with the stewards' line or I stand up and be counted" could be interpreted as lack of confidence. While one does not doubt

his motives in bringing the safety issue into public discussion, Turner does seem, in some of his emotive language, to have engaged his mouth before his brain. His intense unhappiness one day is hard to reconcile with his veritable contentment the next.

Turner added: "I have been gratified by the widespread endorsement of the work undertaken by the Jockey Club's medical staff and my concerns about being 'out of step' seem to have been unfounded."

"I have every confidence that significant progress can be achieved and my proposal to retire from racing at the end of December is therefore withdrawn."

One cannot help feel that the whole matter would have been better tackled by internal discussion rather than allowing the media a free-for-all. Either Turner realises the limelight or believes that going public gets things done.

It may be remembered that he made a name for himself when suggesting on BBC's Panorama programme that 75 per cent of athletes in the Atlanta Olympics would be on performance-enhancing drugs and that the high-tech dope testing equipment was a waste of time.

Part of the discussion yesterday touched on whether his job should continue to be a part time one - Turner works only two or three days a week at the Jockey Club. "We asked whether we should review the terms of reference but it was felt they were absolutely appropriate," said Robert Waley-Cohen, the Racecourse Steward.

Waley-Cohen is currently heading the Jockey Club enquiry into the death of Richard Davis, a 20-year-old apprentice jockey who died in July but does not expect to conclude matters for "another couple of months."

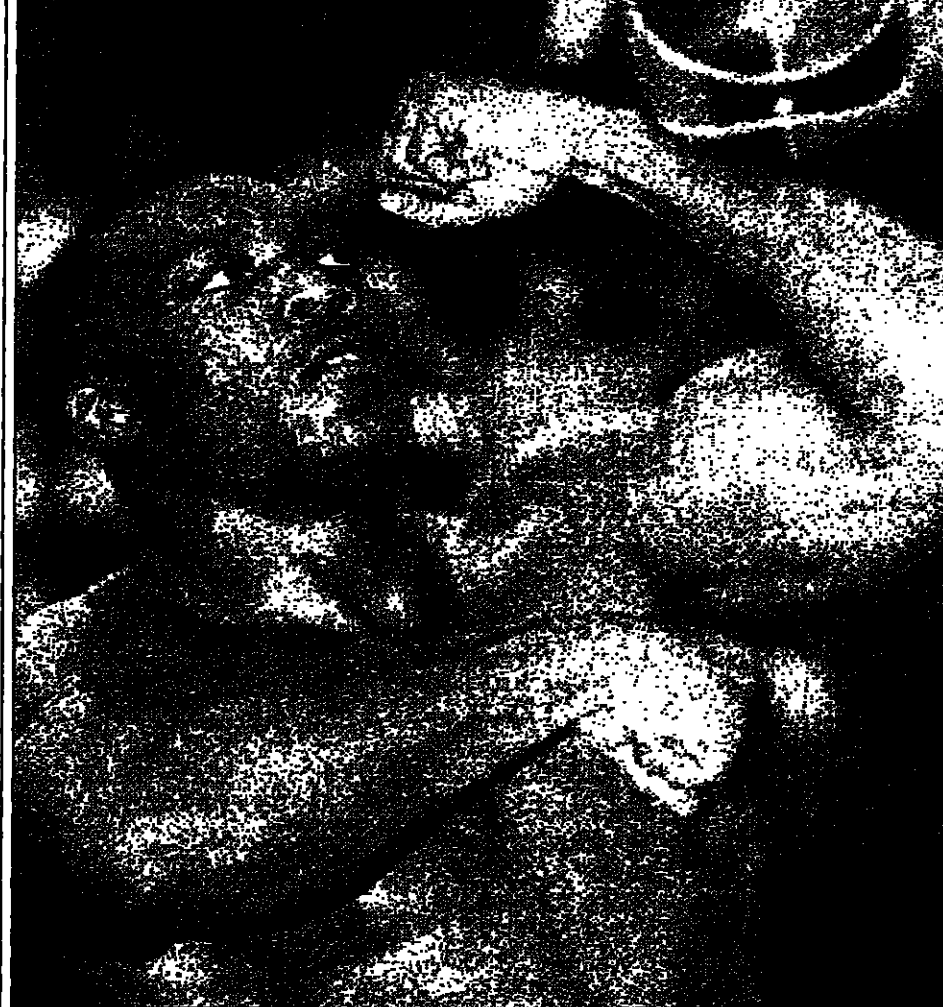
BRUCE SELDON, the World Boxing Association heavyweight champion, told ringsters at a training session yesterday that he is confident of beating Mike Tyson, holder of the World Boxing Council title, on Saturday.

Seldon (above) produced an impressive display with the speed-punching bag at the MGM Grand Garden in Las Vegas, venue for the fight, but the betting in that he takes more than an impressive jab - said Frank Bruno - to avoid trouble against Tyson.

The Atlantic City Express has won 33 of his 36 fights but he was painfully beaten by Oliver McCall and Riddick Bowe and is likely to find that it takes more than an impressive jab - said Frank Bruno - to avoid trouble against Tyson.

Seldon (above) produced an impressive display with the speed-punching bag at the MGM Grand Garden in Las Vegas, venue for the fight, but the betting in that he takes more than an impressive jab - said Frank Bruno - to avoid trouble against Tyson.

The Atlantic City Express has won 33 of his 36 fights but he was painfully beaten by Oliver McCall and Riddick Bowe and is likely to find that it takes more than an impressive jab - said Frank Bruno - to avoid trouble against Tyson.



Seldon talks a good fight for test against Tyson

BRUCE SELDON, the World Boxing Association heavyweight champion, told ringsters at a training session yesterday that he is confident of beating Mike Tyson, holder of the World Boxing Council title, on Saturday.

Seldon (above) produced an impressive display with the speed-punching bag at the MGM Grand Garden in Las Vegas, venue for the fight, but the betting in that he takes more than an impressive jab - said Frank Bruno - to avoid trouble against Tyson.

The Atlantic City Express has won 33 of his 36 fights but he was painfully beaten by Oliver McCall and Riddick Bowe and is likely to find that it takes more than an impressive jab - said Frank Bruno - to avoid trouble against Tyson.

SPORTS NEWS 13

Sport in brief

Farrell and Paul pick up season's honours

ANDY FARRELL, the Wigan loose forward who will captain Great Britain on their tour to Papua New Guinea, Fiji and New Zealand, has been named the 1996 Man of Steel, rugby league's highest individual honour, awarded Paul Fitzpatrick. Farrell, at 21 Great Britain's youngest captain, is also the youngest Man of Steel since Joe Lydon, then with Wigan, won as a 20-year-old in 1964. The Young Player of the Year is the St Helens and Wales forward Kelvin Cunningham, and Robbie Paul, the Bradford Bulls scrum-half and captain, is the Super League's Player of the Season, a title awarded by a ballot of players.

The Great Britain tour squad, which has lost Lee Jackson, Jason Robinson, Gary Connolly and Shaun Edwards, has been brought back close to strength by the inclusion of James Lowes, the Bradford hooker, and Alan Hunte, the St Helens back who can play wing, centre or full-back. London Broncos are searching for another home after confirming that they are to leave The Valley, Richmond's rugby union ground is one option.

Tuigamala free for Wasps

THE former All Black Va'iana Tuigamala will be free to make his rugby union return for Wasps after the Super League season on Sunday. He is set for a debut on Saturday, when his current team-mates Henry Paul and Jason Robinson may play for the Courage league champions. The Department for Education and Employment has granted the 26-year-old a work permit after initially turning down Wasps' application because Tuigamala did not meet the criterion of having played international rugby in the past 18 months. Martin Offiah, another rugby league wing returning to union, is confident of being fit to make his debut for Bedford against Nottingham on Saturday after missing the London Broncos' Super League play-off defeat by St Helens last Sunday.

Rath's Ireland wing Simon Geoghegan is to travel to San Diego at the weekend for surgery on injured toe joints in both feet. Sale have parted company with their chief executive and director of rugby Brian Wilkinson and have appointed the club president Richard Trickey to the latter post, assisted by the former England captain Steve Smith.

Oxford get new Mijnders

OXFORD have signed up the 40-year-old Dutch national coach Rene Mijnders in an attempt to wrest the Boat Race from Cambridge after four successive defeats. The Dutch man's eight won the gold medal at the Atlanta Olympics.

Bryant eased out of pairs

DAVID BRYANT, the 64-year-old winner of 13 world bowls titles, is set to be dropped from the World Indoor Pairs Championship at Preston in January and replaced as Tony Alcock's partner by Norfolk's Mervyn King.

Davies goes off the rails

LAURA DAVIES lost out in a three-way play-off in the LPGA Rail Classic in Springfield, Illinois, after birdying six of the final seven holes for a 66. Davies, who bogeyed the final regular hole, drove poorly in sudden-death play and saw victory go to Michelle McGann at the third extra hole.

York stewards to quiz Eddery

PAT Eddery faces the York stewards before racing today in an enquiry into his use of the whip on Eva Luna in the Galtres Stakes two weeks ago, writes Chris Hawkins.

Eddery had left the course by the time the stewards decided they wanted to see him. If found guilty of an offence he could be suspended and miss the Doncaster St Leger.

Many regard his performance on Eva Luna as vintage stuff and it would be harsh if he were penalised for a highly skilled piece of jockeyship. Whatever the outcome his best chance today seems to be on Galliver (4.40) who caught the eye when a strong-finishing third at Sandown recently.

This is a competitive card but Darling Clover (2.10) has good prospects. She has been running very well in handicaps and is now in a claimant. Select Star (2.40) should go close in the Best Bry Maiden Stakes. An indication of his chance is that he had Warrlin nearly three lengths behind at Ayr in June and meets him on 5lb better terms now.

There was such an air of authority about the victory of Options Open (3.40) here two weeks ago that he should follow up in the Lawrence Batley Handicap.

York card with guide to the latest form

Table with racing results and form guides for various races including 2.10 Harting Clover, 2.40 Options Open, 3.10 Mervyn King, 3.40 Lawrence Batley, 4.10 Mervyn King, 4.40 Mervyn King, 5.10 Mervyn King, 5.40 Mervyn King, 6.10 Mervyn King, 6.40 Mervyn King, 7.10 Mervyn King, 7.40 Mervyn King, 8.10 Mervyn King, 8.40 Mervyn King, 9.10 Mervyn King, 9.40 Mervyn King.

Channel 4

Table with Channel 4 racing results and form guides for various races including 3.40 Lawrence Batley, 4.10 Mervyn King, 4.40 Mervyn King, 5.10 Mervyn King, 5.40 Mervyn King, 6.10 Mervyn King, 6.40 Mervyn King, 7.10 Mervyn King, 7.40 Mervyn King, 8.10 Mervyn King, 8.40 Mervyn King, 9.10 Mervyn King, 9.40 Mervyn King.

Brighton runners and riders

Table with Brighton racing results and form guides for various races including 3.30 Bold African, 3.50 Holton, 4.20 Voices in The Sky, 4.50 Royal Thistle, 5.10 Mervyn King, 5.40 Mervyn King, 6.10 Mervyn King, 6.40 Mervyn King, 7.10 Mervyn King, 7.40 Mervyn King, 8.10 Mervyn King, 8.40 Mervyn King, 9.10 Mervyn King, 9.40 Mervyn King.

Newton Abbot (N.H.) programme

Table with Newton Abbot racing results and form guides for various races including 2.30 Kuzin, 3.00 Chalkabbidy, 3.30 Premier Star, 4.00 Chalkabbidy, 4.30 Rainbow Castle, 5.00 Zinc Lane, 5.30 Mervyn King, 6.00 Mervyn King, 6.30 Mervyn King, 7.00 Mervyn King, 7.30 Mervyn King, 8.00 Mervyn King, 8.30 Mervyn King, 9.00 Mervyn King, 9.30 Mervyn King.

Channel 4

Table with Channel 4 racing results and form guides for various races including 3.10 Mervyn King, 3.40 Mervyn King, 4.10 Mervyn King, 4.40 Mervyn King, 5.10 Mervyn King, 5.40 Mervyn King, 6.10 Mervyn King, 6.40 Mervyn King, 7.10 Mervyn King, 7.40 Mervyn King, 8.10 Mervyn King, 8.40 Mervyn King, 9.10 Mervyn King, 9.40 Mervyn King.

Brighton runners and riders

Table with Brighton racing results and form guides for various races including 3.30 Bold African, 3.50 Holton, 4.20 Voices in The Sky, 4.50 Royal Thistle, 5.10 Mervyn King, 5.40 Mervyn King, 6.10 Mervyn King, 6.40 Mervyn King, 7.10 Mervyn King, 7.40 Mervyn King, 8.10 Mervyn King, 8.40 Mervyn King, 9.10 Mervyn King, 9.40 Mervyn King.

Newton Abbot (N.H.) programme

Table with Newton Abbot racing results and form guides for various races including 2.30 Kuzin, 3.00 Chalkabbidy, 3.30 Premier Star, 4.00 Chalkabbidy, 4.30 Rainbow Castle, 5.00 Zinc Lane, 5.30 Mervyn King, 6.00 Mervyn King, 6.30 Mervyn King, 7.00 Mervyn King, 7.30 Mervyn King, 8.00 Mervyn King, 8.30 Mervyn King, 9.00 Mervyn King, 9.30 Mervyn King.

Channel 4

Table with Channel 4 racing results and form guides for various races including 3.10 Mervyn King, 3.40 Mervyn King, 4.10 Mervyn King, 4.40 Mervyn King, 5.10 Mervyn King, 5.40 Mervyn King, 6.10 Mervyn King, 6.40 Mervyn King, 7.10 Mervyn King, 7.40 Mervyn King, 8.10 Mervyn King, 8.40 Mervyn King, 9.10 Mervyn King, 9.40 Mervyn King.

Results

Table with racing results and form guides for various races including 2.30 Kuzin, 3.00 Chalkabbidy, 3.30 Premier Star, 4.00 Chalkabbidy, 4.30 Rainbow Castle, 5.00 Zinc Lane, 5.30 Mervyn King, 6.00 Mervyn King, 6.30 Mervyn King, 7.00 Mervyn King, 7.30 Mervyn King, 8.00 Mervyn King, 8.30 Mervyn King, 9.00 Mervyn King, 9.30 Mervyn King.

8.6m on
home sales

Blinkered first time today: BRIGHTON 2.50 Danehill Prince; 3.20 Velvet Jones; 3.50 Half An Inch; 4.20 Fiona Shann. NEWTON ABBOT 3.00 Great Union. YORK 2.10 Count Of Flanders; 2.40 Plutarch Angel; 3.40 April The Eighth.

RACELINE 0930 168+ COMMENTARY RESULTS YORK BRIGHTON N. ABBOT

Soccer

Hodde hoping for wing-back spread

David Lacey

WISHFUL thinking it might seem to be, but Glenn Hodde's desire to homogenise the playing patterns of English football at club level has at least struck an initial chord with the Premiership...

of thinking. Aston Villa and Liverpool, for example, have been using the system for some time now, Arsenal and Nottingham Forest are toying with the idea, and now that Chelsea have a genuine sweeper in Frank Leboeuf...

Whether this will amount to anything more than talk will depend to a certain extent on how successful England are as they play the Hoddle way. It will take more than a victory over Moldova to win the argument...

Hodde, who began the task of qualifying for the 1998 World Cup with a 3-0 win in Moldova on Sunday, is set on playing with a three-man defence and wing-backs, the system that served him well at Swindon and Chelsea.

"To set the ball rolling, the League Managers' Association is to arrange a series of regional meetings for next week so that Hodde and his England assistant John Gorman can explain what is wanted."

If the clubs really want to support England they will introduce Hodde's ideas at junior level so that players are brought up playing this way, as they are abroad.

Kanu faces end of career at 20

Richard Williams

INTERNAZIONALE are expected to take legal proceedings against Ajax over the transfer of Nwankwo Kanu, the 20-year-old Nigerian forward who has been told that he will probably never play again.

A heart problem was spotted last week during an examination conducted by doctors in Milan. Kanu was due to make his Serie A debut for Inter this Saturday, alongside Paul Ince and Youri Djorkaeff.

During his time with Ajax he played in two European Cup finals, winning as an 18-year-old against Milan in 1995 and losing this year to Juventus.

The deal with Inter was agreed last January, part of the Italian club's large-scale rebuilding process. Kanu had played in several pre-season games and was due to appear in the opening fixture of the league programme on Saturday, away to Udinese.

Kanu had moved from Ajax to Inter for about £1.3 million. His contract had expired, allowing him to benefit from the Bosman ruling and join the summer exodus to the Italian league from the Amsterdam club, who were keen to keep him but offered a new five-year deal.

His 17-year-old brother Joseph went with him as part of the deal between Ajax and Inter, and is spending a season on loan to the Swiss club Lugano.

Holdsworth demands move after Kinnear criticisms

WIMBLEDON's England B striker Dean Holdsworth last night responded to criticism from the club's manager Joe Kinnear by handing in a transfer request.

Holdsworth said: "But I think it's probably best for all parties concerned if I leave as soon as possible."

Teamtalk The independent news and reports service 0891 33 77+ Arsenal 06 Ipswich Town 10 Sheffield United 15 Aston Villa 11 Leeds United 03 Sheffield Wed. 14

Four on the FA carpet

Martin Thorpe

WITH the season barely two weeks old, three Premiership managers and a coach are in trouble with the Football Association for betting referees.

Graeme Souness, Bryan Robson, Ron Atkinson and Gordon Strachan have been charged with bringing the game into disrepute, and in a separate matter Atkinson and Strachan, the Coventry manager and coach, have been asked for their observations on events during their game at Chelsea.

Three days later Riley, a newcomer to the Premiership list, was criticised by Robson, the Middlesbrough manager, after booking nine players and sending off Boro's Nigel Pearson in the 1-1 draw at Nottingham Forest.

Atkinson and Strachan have been charged after Coventry's reserve match against West Bromwich last week in which Strachan refused to leave the field on being sent off. The referee Tony Green halted play for 15 minutes and afterwards was subjected to a verbal volley from Atkinson.



Bambi on ice... Charlton's Anthony Barnes is left floundering by Uwe Rosler, scorer of City's equaliser

PHOTOGRAPH: MICHAEL STEELE

First Division: Manchester City 2, Charlton Athletic 1

Creaney lifts clouds over Maine Road

Ian Ross

MANCHESTER CITY rode their good fortune in quite outrageous fashion last night to lay claim to a victory which may well mark the start of the club's long overdue renaissance.

With seven minutes remaining, a managerless and clueless club was seemingly destined for a third consecutive defeat. Charlton Athletic had dominated, had entertained royally and deservedly led.

Two minutes left, the substitute Gerry Creaney drove a free-kick just inside a post to earn City a win they in no way deserved.

With City's initial managerial short-list now so much rubbish in the chairman Francis Lee's wastepaper basket, certain arms may have been twisted to certain earlier in the day.

City's response to this week's crisis was predictable enough. They ran about gamely, wisely funneling the ball to the feet of Kinkladze at every opportunity.

They have grown accustomed in recent months. Once Charlton began to accept that they were to be allowed to create chances at will, the evening began to blossom quite nicely.

Gray ready for last Roker derby roar

Michael Walker talks with the Sunderland winger about the passion in tonight's game

DRINK had been taken, Michael Gray admits that. But the comical consequences of one too many in a Spanish resort were seen beyond the four walls of a pub in Margate.

Gray is a hometown boy, one of the few among the senior professionals at Sunderland, and understood the implications of the photograph. He knows too that tonight at Roker Park, in the first Tyne-Wear derby for more than three years, there will be no room for such ambiguity.

That was in April 1993 and four months after his league debut. Gray's derby initiation, "It was pouring all day," he recalled yesterday. "There were massive puddles everywhere but it was a good game. Scott Sellars scored from a free-kick; 0-0 would have been a fair result."

Three weeks later Newcastle were promoted as champions while Sunderland, having used three managers in just over 12 months, escaped relegation by a point. For the 18-year-old Gray, though, it was a great first month. He played 23 times from December, establishing a regular place after a dream debut when he scored in the first minute against Barnsley with virtually his first touch.

Gray... hometown boy. He had heard the Roker roar before, but never for himself. From a Sunderland-made family, Gray had stood on the Fulwell End many times and remembers as a teenager seeing the derby game when John Burridge saved a last-minute penalty at that end of the ground to deny Paul Hartman.

Gray shares the prevailing opinion that the absence of Newcastle fans is an ominous precedent, and having played in the last derby at St James Park he knows all about the value of away support.

Gray is a hometown boy, one of the few among the senior professionals at Sunderland, and understood the implications of the photograph. He knows too that tonight at Roker Park, in the first Tyne-Wear derby for more than three years, there will be no room for such ambiguity.

Gray... hometown boy. He had heard the Roker roar before, but never for himself. From a Sunderland-made family, Gray had stood on the Fulwell End many times and remembers as a teenager seeing the derby game when John Burridge saved a last-minute penalty at that end of the ground to deny Paul Hartman.

Gray... hometown boy. He had heard the Roker roar before, but never for himself. From a Sunderland-made family, Gray had stood on the Fulwell End many times and remembers as a teenager seeing the derby game when John Burridge saved a last-minute penalty at that end of the ground to deny Paul Hartman.

Gray... hometown boy. He had heard the Roker roar before, but never for himself. From a Sunderland-made family, Gray had stood on the Fulwell End many times and remembers as a teenager seeing the derby game when John Burridge saved a last-minute penalty at that end of the ground to deny Paul Hartman.

Results Soccer NATIONWIDE LEAGUE First Division. ENGLISH COCA-COLA CUP First-round, second leg. Results table with columns for various leagues and teams, including scores and goalscorers.

Vertical text on the right edge of the page, including 'The Guardian', 'Stephan', 'Van', 'Cricket', 'Championship', 'Rollins', 'honour', 'solid D', 'Hollis', 'his cor', 'The Guardian', 'Stephan', 'Van', 'Cricket', 'Championship', 'Rollins', 'honour', 'solid D', 'Hollis', 'his cor', 'The Guardian', 'Stephan', 'Van', 'Cricket', 'Championship', 'Rollins', 'honour', 'solid D', 'Hollis', 'his cor'.

Tennis

Stephen Bierley at Flushing Meadow sees Croatia's No. 4 seed in control as he reaches his first US Open quarter-final

Ivanisevic calms the tempest

If a computer is ever designed to forecast the mood of the human mind, rather than merely the weather, its binary bits would surely face meltdown trying to track the storms inside the head of Goran Ivanisevic.

Yesterday morning. There was little atmosphere initially, the US public still recovering from its Labor Day holiday and the news of the missile attack on Iraq.

quarter-final achievement of 1993. The sun climbed, the crowd became a touch more animated and Ivanisevic scowled. It would be wrong to suppose the spectators held their breath for New Yorkers appear to have no need of breath, so fast and loud do they talk - even through the tennis. But they were certainly not sure what might happen.

Vince Spadea in the third round - a five-set match of excruciating tedium - also made the quarter-finals with a swift 6-3, 6-4, 6-2 win over Switzerland's Jakob Hlasek.

Andre Agassi's quarter-final meeting with Thomas Muster is the first men's match fully to capture the attention of the Americans, although the two protagonists have been doing their best to play it down as a grudge match.

and play enough tennis to mislead a lot of people," the Californian said. Muster, dubbed here the "King of clay and court", responded brusquely during the Italian championships that the Americans (and Agassi in particular) showed no respect for the clay-court season.



'King of clay and court'... Muster meets Agassi today

Agassi No. 8, three places higher than his current ATP ranking, and Muster No. 3, one place below his ATP spot, exacerbated the situation.

York skies, day or night. Muster and Agassi are all square after eight meetings, although the American has won the last three in straight sets. "He punches the clock every time he steps out on court," said Agassi. "He busts his butt to win and I don't expect him to do anything else this time."

Cricket

Championship: Somerset v Derbyshire

Rollins takes the honours for solid Derbyshire

David Foot at Taunton

DEAN JONES and Les Stillman make up a potent tutorial at Derby. They complement each other on and off the field, catalysing a county's slumbering skills into pragmatic Aussie competitiveness and title-seeking.

Somerset's season is drifting away ignominiously into a Blackdown mist. They have achieved little and cannot wait for Mushtaq to return in the spring and give them back a purpose, a tweaking ball from his magical wrists, and a West Country smile too often missing this summer.



Playing it down... Irani produces a rare defensive prod to keep Penney on his toes at Edgbaston

Warwickshire v Essex

Late sting injects fresh hope after rescue by Irani

Paul Fitzpatrick at Edgbaston

ESSEX had lost vital ground in the championship race when they subsided to defeat on Headingly's unpredictable pitch on Monday. They failed to recover much of it here yesterday, although they are still very much in contention in what has been the makings of a low-scoring match.

looked imperturbable. He thumped his bat against pad in annoyance when finally he put too much elevation on a ball from Brown and was caught at deep mid-off. One of the season's most distinguished hundreds had almost begun to look a formality.

Surrey v Northamptonshire

Holloake makes his connections

Paul Weaver at The Oval

ENGLAND's selectors have often been beguiled by cricketers with Australian connections, as if determined to get some fair dinkum aggression into the side, but the search for a Mick Dundee has usually unearthed a Kylie Minogue.

century of the season: it was Holloake's fifth and the 10th of his career. His hundred, full of muscular straight-drives, came from only 115 balls and he hit Curtly Ambrose out of the attack with three fours and a six in one over. In all there were 14 fours and two sixes before he was bowled for 129 by Tony Penberthy as he attempted to clear midwicket. Surrey finished on their 378 for nine.

Scoreboard

Table with 2 columns: Team and Score. Includes sections for Warwickshire v Essex, Lancashire v Middlesex, and Northamptonshire v Leicestershire.

NOTES & LEADS

Trout Bridge, Northamptonshire (30s) have scored 320 for nine in their first innings against Leicestershire (4).

LANCASHIRE v MIDDLESSEX

Old Trafford, Lancashire (40s) lead Middlesex (2) by 15 runs with three testings and no wickets standing.

Nottinghamshire v Leicestershire

Simmons shows the energy

David Hopps at Trent Bridge

ONE of county cricket's strangest phenomena occurred again at regular intervals here yesterday. It is called the "energy circle" and must explain why Leicestershire's unexpected challenge for the championship has persisted into September.

Under James Whitaker's captaincy Leicestershire have become a side to be reckoned with. Vince Wells's England chances might have long passed him by but he has had an excellent all-round season.

Brind called to Old Trafford

LANCASHIRE have had their Old Trafford pitch reported by the umpires to be the Test and County Cricket Board after 17 wickets fell on the first day of the game against Middlesex.

ley, Graham Lloyd, Watkinson and Steve Ellorby to finish with four for 42. Steve James, in his sixth century of the season to put Glamorgan in a commanding position against Hampshire at Southampton. But the visitors, who reached 229 for five by the close, would have been even better placed but for a late burst of three wickets in 11 balls by Dmitri Mascarenhas, making his debut.

Veteran Boon to lead Durham

DAVID BOON, the former Australian Test batsman, will be Durham's captain and overseas player next season.

Geoff Cook said yesterday. "Durham's unique situation as a developing club appealed to him very much."

Cricket News and Scores. Includes a list of county scores, a complete county scores table, and contact information for The Guardian Interactive.

SportsGuardian

ENGLAND'S CHAIRMAN OF SELECTORS CLEARED

Delight for Illy at Lord's victory

Mike Selvey on the appeal hearing with an angry aftermath

RAYMOND Illingworth, whose three-year period as England's chairman of selectors effectively has less than a week to run, can leave cricket with his reputation intact.

Yesterday at Lord's, Illingworth won his appeal against a charge of bringing the game into disrepute, and emerged from the hearing suitably relieved. "I'm delighted with the result," he declared before driving home to Farsley in Yorkshire.

"It is a relief that everything has ended now. It has been a long, hard six months and my wife and family have been subjected to a lot of pressure. But I feel vindicated and delighted that my name has been cleared. I didn't want to leave the game with a disrepute charge hanging over me."

Illingworth's Yorkshire lawyer Michael Lawrence was in a less placatory mood, however, and afterwards launched into a stinging attack on the Test and County Cricket Board, accusing it of "racism in reverse". Illingworth, he said, had been put through a trial that "should never have taken place".

In June Illingworth had been fined £2,000 plus £500 costs by the discipline committee of the TCCB after the publication in the Daily Express of extracts from his book *One-Man Committee*.

He was also charged with making public statements "that may be prejudicial to the interests of cricket", notably his account of the bust-up with the fast bowler Devon Malcolm during the tour of

South Africa last winter, and revelations of voting procedures at confidential selection meetings.

Illingworth has always maintained that he was exercising a reasonable right of reply to complaints by Malcolm in the same newspaper that he had been shabbily treated. The player received nothing more than a slap on the wrist, despite the fact that he had broken the terms of his contract with the board.

Yesterday Lawrence said that the plank of Illingworth's appeal was that he had been treated very differently from Malcolm, who in addition to his complaints had suggested that Illingworth's antipathy was racially motivated, a charge he later withdrew.

Lawrence said: "Ray wanted to make peace with Devon Malcolm and offered to meet him on his return from the World Cup. But he was told by the TCCB that it would be *sub judice* to their disciplinary hearing with him. That is absolutely untrue."

Derbyshire also wanted to hear the other side of the story, following Malcolm's article, but they were not allowed to at the instigation of the TCCB.

"But why should Ray have been treated any differently to Malcolm? They admitted he was in breach of his contract, but the discipline committee seemed to be frightened to deal with Malcolm."

"It was racism in reverse, because you can't treat one man differently to another. In my view, the way in which Ray's case was dealt with was wrong."

Lawrence added: "Ray received some terrible letters accusing him of being a racist and he was subjected to a lot of hurtful press comment. Many people had read Devon



Beamer at Lord's... Raymond Illingworth, whose lawyer accused the TCCB of 'racism in reverse' PHOTOGRAPH: FRANK BARON

Malcolm's statements and they were wholly untrue."

Illingworth's appeal was heard yesterday by the four-man appeal panel of the nebulous Cricket Council, chaired by Desmond Ferrett, QC. Having started at 10.30 in the

morning, the hearing finally ended at 4.20pm, whereupon Lawrence reported that all the charges had been dropped. "The fine has been rescinded," he announced, "and the costs have gone as well. There was in effect a re-

hearing today and it was perfectly conducted."

Later Lawrence was to add: "This case should never have been brought. Proceedings against Ray were dealt with in a different way to how they had been with Malcolm."

Illingworth was appalled by the original hearing but he also believed that the whole issue would never have arisen had the board dealt with Malcolm in a proper manner in the first place.

Malcolm's original article was itself a response to press statements attributed to Illingworth and the England

bowling coach Peter Lever, in which the bowler was derided as a "nonentity", although this was a fragment of a longer, less defamatory quote. Most would say that, contract or not, a person should have a simple right of reply, and that is what Malcolm would say he was doing: clearly the board took that view. But then, Illingworth countered, what was good for one was good for the other.

The TCCB spokesman Richard Little said: "We certainly do not make any discrimination because of creed or colour."

Kind hearts fail without hard arteries



Vincent Hanna

BACK from holiday, I have had letters from the Virginia Bottomley fan club. "Bless her heart," they say. "Didn't she send to our [bowling/tennis/cricket] club a large Lottery cheque? How dare you speak ill of her."

I yield to no one in my esteem for our National Heritage Secretary, and her lovely spouse. But people don't listen. At Edge Hall Road, where I tripped to see Orrell annihilated by Bath, I got an earful.

My friend George, the surgeon, brought his parents. His mother snarled: "Do you realise that she's saving public money? Better than paying higher taxes like that Tony Blair wants." I was startled to hear Robert, George's mild-mannered father, speak sharply: "You're daft, woman. That's exactly what you are paying higher taxes for."

He is right. We currently spend £2.4 billion on the Lottery, of which the Treasury collects 12 per cent. That is £288 million of extra tax. Yes, I know that people don't have to buy Lottery tickets, but neither do they have to smoke or own television sets. That attracts indirect taxation too.

I know that sport gets its handouts through the Sports Council, but Keighley Tennis Club (£1,500) and Smith's Park in Newcastle (£5.76 million) received money in much the same way as do their local hospitals: from a government-appointed quango.

Politicians say that sport has nothing to do with increased public expenditure. But it has. A local authority that tried to spend on social housing would be capped or penalised. But public funding for a sports academy and a national stadium is somehow squared with private enterprise. British voters pay higher taxes, but nobody squeals.

I happen to support the Lottery idea. Virginia is right to extol the £304 million spent, so far, on 1,849 projects. But what I like is the sense of balance that direct government funding brings to sports finance. I don't know whether Mobblerley Cricket Club deserves £2,500 or whether the University of Central Lancashire needs £7.9 million, but at least

there is some element of accountability about the decision-making process.

Ironically, I had a similar thought about American football, which kicked off this week. The teams are owned by rich investors who hold franchises from the National Football League. Teams have tended to wander from city to city in an anarchic way—the Oakland Raiders to Los Angeles and back again, the Cleveland Browns to Baltimore, renamed the Ravens.

A bit of order is beginning to emerge. The NFL commissioner Paul Tagliabue has become entangled in legal action with the Seattle Seahawks over a proposed move to southern California, and there are anti-trust cases involving the Dallas Cowboys and the Oakland Raiders. And the NFL is helping finance the new team in Cleveland next season. More importantly, there is growing civic involvement in some of the franchises. Voters in Cincinnati and Detroit have opted for higher local taxes to help fund their teams.

My point is this: sport is a greedy business and its temptations are legion. Sport works best when there is some centralised and accountable influence over the distribution of both money and power. This is no exercise in purveyorocracy, nor do I want the people involved to be nice. But market forces are a poor hedge against sleaze and exploitation.

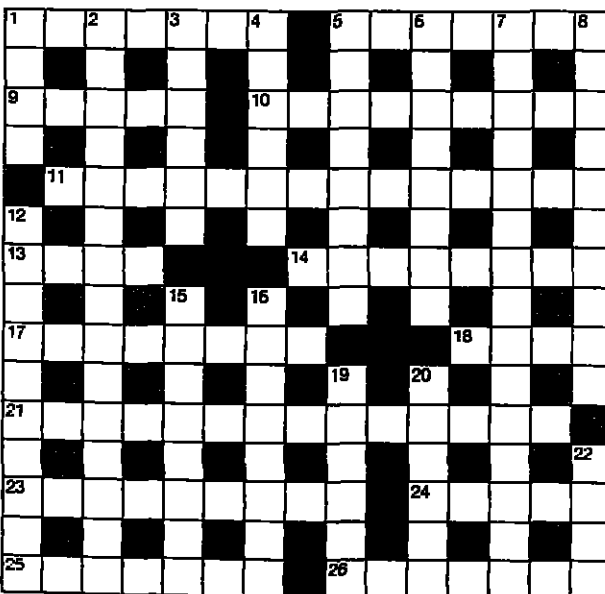
BRITISH tennis may not be the envy of the world, but the Lawn Tennis Association handles large sums of money, with some degree of accountability. Rugby league may have sold out to Rupert Murdoch, but at least it acts in a unified and open way. Agree with it or not, it knows what it is doing and you know where the money is going.

Cricket is the only rugby union, torn apart by the hypocrisy and self-interest of clubs, players, sponsors, administrators and Rupert Murdoch (again). It might think hard about the appointment of an American-style rugby commissioner. For that, in effect, is the role played by Maurice Taylor in the Rugby League. Soccer should do it too, before the game turns into a super league for the half-dozen clubs who earn and spend all the money.

In the US, commissioners' jobs are much sought after by politicians who have just left office.

My friend George says he can just see Virginia as a strict gym mistress. But he's into that sort of thing.

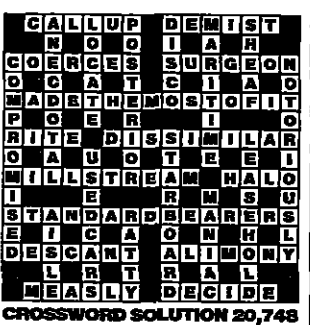
Guardian Crossword No 20,749



- Across**
- 1 Was etymologist primarily — American fellow dropping the 'u' (7)
 - 5 Skinflint restricting us is one guilty of ill treatment (7)
 - 9 Gravity conveyed in dreadful song of lament (5)
 - 10 Extensive fear when little old batterer enters (9)
 - 11 "Fuel Frontal Tour in trouble!" — result if you do this? (3,3,2,6)
 - 13 One gaining advantage as terrible ruler? (4)
 - 14 Quiet worker may be a guerrilla (8)
 - 17 Endanger small number no and, then a bigger number (8)
 - 18 Glass tilts — article in middle drops out (4)
 - 21 Demand a lot of money to electrify the planet (6,3,5)
 - 23 Understand arithmetical error? (6,3)

- Down**
- 1 An extra few ideas incompletely formed (4)
 - 2 Where aircraft have difficulties there could be a bad gremlin — true? (7,8)
 - 3 Shaking, gripped by violent remorse (6)
 - 4 Name about to get placed on front of envelope (6)
 - 5 Hawk in naval vessel? (3-2-3)
 - 6 Deceitful people offering gifts, half looking one way and half the other (8)
 - 7 Precise blame set out when one's less than completely worthy (15)
 - 8 To migrate again to cooler NE is unusual (10)
 - 12 Female is getting copper into quarrels and fights (10)
 - 15 Follower, unpaid, harbouring resentment? (6-2)
 - 16 Oxen trod here and there on the adjacent patch (4,4)
 - 19 Vivacious and spasmodic motion aiding digestion (6)
 - 20 Animal with nasty bug losing tail (6)
 - 22 Phosphorus getting to the root of border plant (4)

Set by Pasquale



- Across**
- 10 GALLUP DENIST
 - 11 COERCES SURGEON
 - 12 O A T Y A R
 - 13 A D E M P T O P I T
 - 14 R I T E D I S S I T A O
 - 15 A U D I T E E I
 - 16 I L L U S T R A M H A L O
 - 17 T A M A R O P I A N E
 - 18 E I G A O H L
 - 19 L E R T A L L
 - 20 M E A S U R E D I C T I O
- Down**
- 1 G A L L U P
 - 2 D E N I S T
 - 3 C O E R C E S
 - 4 S U R G E O N
 - 5 O A T
 - 6 Y A R
 - 7 A D E M P T
 - 8 O P I T
 - 9 R I T E
 - 10 D I S S I T A O
 - 11 A U D I T E E I
 - 12 I L L U S T R A M H A L O
 - 13 T A M A R O P I A N E
 - 14 E I G A O H L
 - 15 L E R T A L L
 - 16 M E A S U R E D I C T I O

England players in open revolt

Robert Armstrong on the clubs v country crisis that is tearing rugby union apart

ENGLISH rugby union lurched towards anarchy last night when the 43-man national squad agreed to boycott today's training session at Bisham Abbey in the wake of the feud between Twickenham and the country's top clubs.

Earlier in the day a quartet of Leicester forwards, Graham Rowntree, Martin Johnson, Richard Cockerill and Darren Garforth, became the first to announce they would boycott the squad session. Last night the rest of the squad agreed to support them.

The League One and Two clubs now employ the players and are in bitter conflict with the Rugby Football Union,

whose contracts with last season's players ran out last weekend.

Peter Wheeler, the Leicester chief executive, said the players had made their own decision. "We didn't say to them, 'You will not go.' We told them the position as we saw it and left it up to them."

The players will now attend a presentation from the English Professional Rugby Union Clubs (Epruc) instead of the training session.

The RFU had earlier insisted that today's session would go ahead as planned. "We had a clear understanding about squad sessions with Epruc which should work without any trouble, but the players have been put under

pressure by the clubs," said Don Rutherford, England's technical director.

Rutherford, who is expected to take over some managerial duties with England shortly, claimed the clubs "had put the thumbs on the players", possibly because they feared the players might sign contracts with the RFU for the new season. "In fact, no contracts will be offered this week," he said. "though we may discuss them with the players in addition to selection matters."

"Whatever happens the contracts, when they are accepted, will be back-dated to September 3. It would be very sad, with international rugby having moved to a higher level as seen in the southern hemisphere, if England's preparations were impinged upon at this stage."

However, Donald Kerr, the chairman of Epruc, made it clear that the clubs had put their case, for independence from the RFU, to the players and sought their support. "The players are the key to this dispute," he declared. "They are being paid reasonable salaries, we have stuck our necks out for them, and it's their turn to stick their necks out for us."

"But we do not wish to put them in an invidious position and we know that the Rugby Football Union are threatening the players with losing their England places if they fail to attend."

Fran Cotton, the Lions manager for next year's tour of South Africa, said the players were involved in a dispute not of their own making. "They are becoming piggies in the middle. All they want to do is play for their clubs and their country," he said.

Continental Airlines

See your travel agent or call Continental on 0800 776464.

مکان الامم

Inside